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HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS: HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATIONS AND REPORTS OF SPECIAL RAPPORTEURS AND REPRESENTATIVES

The situation of human rights in the territory of the former Yugoslavia

Note by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General has the honour to transmit to the members of the General Assembly and the Security Council the report on the situation of human rights in the territory of the former Yugoslavia prepared by Mr. Tadeusz Mazowiecki, Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights, in accordance with Commission resolution 1992/S-1/1 of 14 August 1992 and Economic and Social Council decision 1992/305 of 18 August 1992 (see annex).

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ANNEX

Report on the situation of human rights in the territory of the former Yugoslavia submitted by Mr. Tadeusz Mazowiecki, Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights, pursuant to paragraph 14 of Commission resolution 1992/S-1/1

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Introduction

1. At its first special session, the Commission on Human Rights adopted resolution 1992/S-1/1 on 14 August 1992 in which it requested its Chairman to appoint a special rapporteur to investigate first hand the human rights situation in the territory of the former Yugoslavia, in particular within Bosnia and Herzegovina, and to receive relevant, credible information on the human rights situation there from Governments, individuals, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, on a continuing basis, and to avail himself or herself of the assistance of existing mechanisms of the Commission on Human Rights.

2. The Special Rapporteur visited areas of interest in the former Yugoslavia, and in particular Bosnia and Herzegovina, from 21 to 26 August 1992 in order to report to the members of the Commission on Human Rights not later than 28 August 1992, in accordance with the request expressed in the resolution. Given the very limited time at the disposal of the Special Rapporteur, his first visit had to concentrate on the most urgent problems, notably the particularly dramatic situation in the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Under the circumstances, it was not possible to examine in depth all the human rights-related aspects of the tragic situation prevailing in that part of the former Yugoslavia. The present report therefore contains a diagnosis of the main problems on the basis of the evidence obtained during the mission, which has allowed the Special Rapporteur to understand the situation and to formulate recommendations.

3. The Special Rapporteur requested the Chairman of the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention, the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions and the Special Rapporteur on the question of torture to accompany him on the mission. The Chairman of the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention, Mr. Louis Joinet, and the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, Mr. Bacre W. Ndiaye, were in a position to accept his invitation. This enabled the mission to examine a number of situations at the same time and within the short period available, to visit more places and interview more people than would otherwise have been possible.

4. In accordance with established practice, the mission met with representatives of Governments and local authorities as well as intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations. It also received information from representatives of political parties and minority groups and met with religious dignitaries of various faiths. The mission interviewed a number of victims of human rights violations from all the ethnic groups concerned as well as witnesses to such violations, and spoke to ordinary citizens in the various places visited.

5. It should be noted that although the visit concentrated on Bosnia and Herzegovina it was not possible to visit all the areas of interest in that Republic, owing to difficulties of access to certain areas of conflict surrounded by combat zones. It is therefore the intention of the Special Rapporteur to include in future missions not only parts of the former Yugoslavia not yet visited but also to return to those areas of Bosnia and Herzegovina in which additional investigations will be necessary, in particular in connection with the problem of detention camps.

I. OBSERVATIONS CONCERNING THE SITUATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE AREAS VISITED

A. The policy of ethnic cleansing

6. Most of the territory of the former Yugoslavia, in particular Bosnia and Herzegovina, is at present the scene of massive and systematic violations of human rights, as well as serious grave violations of humanitarian law. Ethnic cleansing is the cause of most such violations.

1. Ethnic cleansing directed against Muslims and ethnic Croatians in the territories of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia under the control of ethnic Serbs 1/

7. The Special Rapporteur was able to collect credible testimony concerning the policy of ethnic cleansing and the methods applied to achieve its aim. According to the testimony received, the policy has been openly pursued on the territory of those parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia which are controlled by ethnic Serbs.

8. The methods used are illustrated by the testimony of a witness from Bosanska Dubica. According to the witness, the elected authorities who were moderates or who tried to prevent acts of violence were dismissed and replaced by Serbian extremists. Muslims, who represented the majority in Bosanska Dubica, and to a lesser extent Croatians were continuously subjected to harassment, discrimination and violence perpetrated by Serbian soldiers, Serbian mercenaries and even by some of their Serbian neighbours in the village. The witness described an incident in which Serbian soldiers from different villages boasted in her presence about the number of Muslims they had killed.

9. Several people, among them a boyfriend of the witness, were killed. Every night, during a curfew imposed from 10 p.m. to 5 a.m., houses were burnt. The mosque was also burnt down. A large number of people were arrested. Taken to the local police station for interrogation, they were either beaten and tortured by the police or forced to beat each other. Children from Muslim or Croatian families were refused treatment at the local hospital.

10. At the beginning of June, 200 men were arrested and taken to the detention camp in Manjaca. Among them were 10 Croatians, whom the Serbs had labelled "Muslim extremists". Reportedly, after the first visit by representatives of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to the camp, the families in Bosanska Dubica received typewritten letters from their relatives stating that they were well.

1/ See annex II, "Observations concerning the parties in control of the territories visited".

11. Muslims who wanted to leave the village were allowed to do so only together with their entire family. The transfer of the refugees was organized by the local Red Cross, which cooperated closely with the local Serbian authorities. Before those willing to leave were permitted to do so, they were forced to sign documents stating that they would never come back. No reference was made in those documents to their possessions in the village, their houses in particular. The witness stated that they could either sell them at a ridiculous price or give the keys to the municipality for the duration of their absence which, after they had signed the above-mentioned documents, was supposedly for ever.

12. Indeed, a variety of methods are used to pursue ethnic cleansing. Ethnic Croatians and Muslims employed in the public sector have been fired because of their ethnic origin. The public sector is large in the former Yugoslavia, and tens of thousands of persons have been affected by such measures. In so far as persons employed in the private sector are concerned, evidence was received that the shops and businesses owned by ethnic Croatians have been burned or looted.

13. In territories controlled by ethnic Serbs, shooting during the night at homes belonging to members of other ethnic groups or throwing explosives into them are common forms of intimidation. One such incident occurred a few days before the arrival of the Special Rapporteur in Banja Luka. In the village of Celinac, 17 houses occupied by Muslim families were blown up in a single night, after reports were received that some soldiers from the village had been killed in combat. As a result, and since it would have been impossible to flee the region, some 650 Muslims sought refuge in a school. The ICRC had not yet been allowed to visit the school, and there was fear that the Muslims were in danger of starvation. During his interview with the authorities in the regional capital, some 15 kilometres from Celinac, the Special Rapporteur asked whether it would be possible to visit the school. Despite the fact that one of the authorities present was President of the Regional Executive Council and that there was no reason to think that the Muslim families were in custody, the Special Rapporteur was informed that it would not be possible to visit the school without the permission of the mayor of the village, who was said to be away visiting the battle-front. He was promised that the ICRC would be allowed access and to provide relief.

14. Another recent example brought to the attention of the Special Rapporteur concerned the displacement of some 1,000 Muslims from their homes in the town of Sanski Most, 28 kilometres from Banja Luka, the week before his visit. These persons were driven by the local authorities towards territory controlled by the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina, but were left on their own inside Serbian-controlled territory. The ICRC does not assist in such forced evacuations, since it wishes to avoid cooperating in ethnic cleansing. Consequently, in order to reach a zone controlled by friendly forces, the victims of ethnic cleansing must cross through combat zones, at great risk to their life and safety.

15. Such tactics were also common in the Serbian-occupied areas of Croatia, especially prior to the deployment of the United Nations Protective Force (UNPROFOR). In the United Nations Protected Area (UNPA)-North the members of the mission saw one town which was almost completely destroyed and others

where the homes belonging to Muslims had been selectively destroyed by explosives. The use of such tactics has decreased thanks to the efforts of UNPROFOR to restrain the activities of the local militia, but the shootings and the bombing of homes continues in the UNPAs, although on a lesser scale, and the victims of ethnic cleansing continue to flee.

16. Attacks on churches and mosques is also part of the campaign of intimidation used to force Muslims and ethnic Croatians to flee Bosnian territory, and the mission saw places of worship bearing the marks of bullets and explosives during its trip to Banja Luka.

17. The siege, including the shelling of population centres and the cutting off of supplies of food and other essential goods, is another tactic used to force Muslims and ethnic Croatians to flee. The most dramatic and well-known case is Sarajevo, the capital of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The city is shelled on a regular basis, in what appears to be a deliberate attempt to spread terror among the population. Snipers shoot innocent civilians. The mission visited the hospital, and was able to see many civilian victims. It was also able to see the damage done to the hospital itself, which has been deliberately shelled on several occasions, despite the proper display of the internationally recognized Red Cross symbol. Cultural centres have also been targeted, leading some observers to the belief that the attacking forces are determined to "kill" the city itself, and the tradition of tolerance and inter-ethnic harmony which it represents.

18. The civilian population lives in a constant state of anxiety, leaving their homes or shelters only when necessary. Any movement out of doors is hazardous, and many persons and families spend long periods in isolation. The public systems for distribution of electrical power and water no longer function. Food and other basic necessities are scarce, and depend on the airlift organized by UNHCR and protected by UNPROFOR. UNPROFOR barracks and headquarters, as well as the airport itself, have been among the principal targets of the shelling. All three were attacked during the few hours that the mission was in Sarajevo. Delivery of such humanitarian supplies as do arrive is problematic. All inhabitants of the city are seriously affected by the fighting and the siege.

19. The Special Rapporteur also visited Vukovar, a city in eastern Croatia almost entirely destroyed by shelling during a siege which commenced in November 1991 during the attack on Croatia by the Yugoslav army. It is to be feared that the same fate may befall Sarajevo, unless action is taken to prevent the constant bombardment by mortars and artillery.

20. The city and region of Bihac, in north-west Bosnia, is also besieged by ethnic Serbian forces. Shelling occurs daily. There are no significant military targets in the city, and the main reason for the shelling appears to be that of terrorizing the civilian population. Fifty-one children have been killed there since the beginning of the war, according to the physician who is director of the hospital, and the hospital itself had been struck by shells on three occasions. Humanitarian convoys bring a limited amount of food and medicine to the town and carry some of those needing specialized medical care

to better equipped hospitals outside the region. However, the lack of certain medical supplies and the limited access to medical facilities constitute a grave threat to the health and lives of those in need.

21. The siege has also had a dramatic effect on the economy of the region, making this previously prosperous area dependent on food aid provided by the international community. A humanitarian worker interviewed in Bihac who had previously worked in Kurdistan said that the economic blockade of Bihac was "a hundred times worse" than the one in Kurdistan.

22. Other cities and regions in Bosnia and Herzegovina are reportedly in a similar situation.

23. The detention of civilians is clearly being used as a method of pressuring them to leave the territory. In many cases, after agreeing to leave, they are obliged to sign documents renouncing their claim to their homes and other property, or indicating that they agree to donate their property to the local government. Ethnic Serbs in Bosnia and Herzegovina have also adopted the policy of "exchanging prisoners". According to some impartial observers, the need to obtain ethnic Serbs to exchange against detained Muslims is one of the main reasons for arbitrary detention of ethnic Serbs in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

2. The situation elsewhere in Bosnia and Herzegovina

24. The Muslims have been accused of pursuing a deliberate policy of emptying the territory under their control of ethnic Serbs. Members of the mission were able to visit Bihac, a predominantly Muslim area under government control. The information obtained led to the conclusion that no policy which could be compared to ethnic cleansing is being applied in this region. Unfortunately, the visit of the mission to Sarajevo had to be terminated prematurely due to an intensification of attacks on United Nations forces stationed there, and it was not possible to visit other regions of central Bosnia under the control of the recognized Government. Consequently, it was not possible to verify whether the policy of tolerance observed in Bihac is common to other areas controlled by the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

25. Some information was received that a policy of ethnic cleansing is being applied against ethnic Serbs and Muslims in an area of Bosnia and Herzegovina adjacent to southern Croatia, where the population is predominantly of Croatian origin. It was not possible to visit this area during the first mission, and thus not possible to investigate the situation prevailing there nor the extent to which this area is under the effective control of the recognized Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Efforts will be made to visit this area at the earliest opportunity.

3. The flight of ethnic Serbs from Croatia

26. Discrimination, harassment and maltreatment of ethnic Serbs are also serious and widespread problems in Croatia. These practices have resulted in the flight of a large number of ethnic Serbs to Serbia and to those parts of Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina under the control of ethnic Serbs.

27. The mission received copies of published lists of citizens of Croatia indicating their ethnic origin. These lists are widely distributed, and even available for sale to the public. The circulation of such lists facilitates discrimination and harassment throughout the society. Tens of thousands of persons have reportedly lost their jobs as a result. The mission was also informed that ethnic Serbs suffer discrimination in the exercise of their political rights, in education and in their right to a pension.

28. In a refugee camp near Belgrade, members of the mission interviewed a citizen of Croatia of Serbian origin who had been prosecuted for rebellion. After acquittal, he was denounced by the local radio as a "chetnic", that is, a member of the virulently anti-Croatian paramilitary group believed responsible for the commission of many atrocities against the civilian population. He considered this accusation to represent an implicit threat against his life and safety, and fled to Serbia, leaving his wife and children in Croatia.

29. In Croatia, the Chairman of the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention received evidence of the detention of large numbers of ethnic Serbs on charges of rebellion, often with no tangible evidence of real links to the unrecognized government of "Krajina" and the forces loyal to it. This practice, in effect, amounts to detention of the civilian population on the basis of their ethnic origin.

30. The importance of the human rights violations suffered by ethnic Serbs in Croatia cannot be underestimated or minimized. Nevertheless, the evidence available at this time suggests that the practices which have caused large numbers of Serbs to flee to Serbia and to parts of Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina under the control of ethnic Serbs, however repugnant, cannot be compared to the systematic use of violence employed against ethnic Croatians and Muslims in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

4. The situation in Serbia and Montenegro

31. The leadership of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, which comprises the Republics of Serbia and Montenegro, does not openly endorse the policy of ethnic cleansing. In a statement made to the Special Rapporteur, the President of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia condemned ethnic cleansing. He also stated that the solution to the ethnic conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina is "cantonization", which he defined as the establishment of ethnically mixed units within Bosnia and Herzegovina with reciprocal guarantees for the rights of ethnic Serbs, ethnic Croatians and Muslims. The President of Serbia also repudiated the policy of ethnic cleansing in statements to the Special Rapporteur. However, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and Serbia clearly exercise very great influence on the "Serbian Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina" which, without their cooperation, would be completely cut off from the rest of the world. There is thus far no evidence that the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and Serbia have taken effective measures to use their influence to put a stop to ethnic cleansing in Bosnia.

32. In addition, there is some evidence that ethnic cleansing may be imminent in certain parts of Serbia and Montenegro where there are large communities of persons not of Serbian origin. In Kosovo, where the population of Albanian origin has complained of discrimination and oppression for many years, non-governmental organizations presented evidence of an increasing number of torture and killings. In Vojvodina, in the north of Serbia, where there are large numbers of persons of Hungarian, Croatian and other origins, an increase in the harassment and intimidation of the non-Serbian population has been reported. Thousands of persons are already reported to be fleeing the region of Sandzac, on the border of Serbia and Montenegro, where the population is largely Muslim. It was not possible to visit any of these areas during the mission, and the Special Rapporteur intends to explore these aspects of his mandate further during future missions.

B. Other serious human rights violations

1. Detention

33. Detention has occurred in various contexts in the territories of the former Yugoslavia, including the war between Croatia and Serbia and Montenegro, the current conflict between various forces within Bosnia and Herzegovina and the continuing low-intensity conflict between the Croatian army and militias and the ethnic Serbs who occupy the UNPAs in Croatia. Nearly all the prisoners of war taken by both sides in the conflict between Croatia and Serbia and Montenegro have been exchanged. Within Bosnia and Herzegovina, an unknown number of true prisoners of war, i.e. combatants, are held by the various parties to the conflict. Civilians have also been detained in order to force them to leave their homes as part of the policy of ethnic cleansing, as indicated above.

34. At this stage, it is not possible to estimate the number of persons presently in detention, or the number who have been detained since the beginning of the conflict. Credible reports have been received concerning the use of unrecognized detention facilities containing from 10 to 100 prisoners, including homes, schools, disused factories and warehouses, sports facilities and the like. This practice has been reported in Croatia as well as in Bosnian territories under the control of the Government as well as territories under the control of ethnic Serbs. Increased use of this practice has been reported in Bosnian territories under the control of ethnic Serbs in recent weeks, since the issue of detention camps has come to the attention of international public opinion, in an apparent attempt to prevent access by international observers.

35. Although some prisons were visited, the mission was not able to visit any detention camps. This was due in part to the fact that few camps were located near the cities visited. The Special Rapporteur did, however, try to visit the military camp known as Manjaca, near Banja Luka, which is said to be the largest detention camp on Bosnian territory under the control of ethnic Serbs. The mission reached the camp and was informed by the officer in charge that 3,000 prisoners of war were currently being held there. The Special Rapporteur requested the officer in charge to grant permission to visit the prisoners but this was denied. The officer in charge stated that

the prisoners were "tired of being visited by international missions"; he then said that it was too late in the day for a visit, although it was more than an hour before sunset; finally he indicated that he could not allow the prisoners to be seen because the mission had not requested permission from the central authorities to enter the "Serbian Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina". The treatment the Special Rapporteur received from the officer in charge gave him a vivid impression of the state of terror under which the detainees are presumably living.

36. Although the mission failed to see the prisoners in Manjaca camp, it was provided with information, including photos, by persons who had visited the camp a few weeks earlier. Many prisoners were in a poor state of health, with signs of malnutrition and in some cases torture. The Special Rapporteur has also been informed that a man detained at Manjaca camp who was recently taken to hospital weighed only 34 kilogrammes. Well-informed sources estimated that the number of prisoners was in all probability considerably higher than the official figures indicated.

37. Prisoners were also interviewed during the visit to the Bihac prison, in Bosnian territory under government control. No complaints of torture were received.

2. Executions

38. Many allegations of the systematic execution of prisoners by all parties were also received from Governments or other sources whose objectivity could not be confirmed. The only information received from an impartial source concerned allegations received by the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions of the systematic execution of prisoners in an area controlled by the White Eagles paramilitary group in north-eastern Bosnia. Access to this area is very difficult, and the allegations have not been proven.

39. There is credible evidence that some prisoners have died of torture and mistreatment in both Croatia and the various parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and at the present stage of this investigation it cannot be ruled out that executions may have been carried out systematically in other regions. However, many allegations of systematic execution - like allegations of the existence of large camps of detainees - have been investigated by the humanitarian bodies present in the territories, and proven false. A real threat to the lives of prisoners does exist, however, because of the poor nutrition, crowding and other substandard conditions of detention, in particular as the weather turns colder in the coming weeks and months.

40. The greatest threat to life at present comes from the shelling of civilian population centres and the shooting of civilians in besieged towns. In addition, there is a risk that massive numbers of civilians will die from malnutrition, illness and exposure unless the present siege of various areas of Bosnia and Herzegovina under government control is lifted before the arrival of winter.

3. Disappearances

41. The Special Rapporteur was also informed about the massive occurrence of disappearances in territories controlled by ethnic Serbs. Three thousand disappearances were reported to have occurred in the aftermath of the fall of Vukovar; it was alleged that these persons had been held for a certain period in camps and had subsequently disappeared.

4. Other violations

42. The Special Rapporteur has been informed of particularly grave incidents of physical abuse of Catholic priests and nuns by Serbian forces in the area of Banja Luka.

43. The President of the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention was able to visit Bjelovar prison, in Croatia, where he interviewed two prisoners who complained of torture after their capture on 5 August 1992. The methods of torture used included beatings, which caused broken teeth and ribs, electric shock, mock execution, burning with cigarettes and burning of the beard of one of the prisoners. They were tortured first by the local police and later, for a period of several days, by the military police. This member of the mission was allowed to examine the files of the prison which contained the records of prisoners who had arrived at the prison showing signs of torture. The relevant authorities have different attitudes towards such serious violations of human rights. It is to the credit of the Government that some prison officials duly register evidence of torture and provide all necessary medical care to victims of torture who come into their custody. However, UNPROFOR civilian police officials report that the Croatian police fail to cooperate in the investigation of such crimes, in which the police themselves are often involved.

C. Factors contributing to the violation of human rights

44. The Special Rapporteur noted with great concern the extent to which the population is armed, especially in the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina under the control of ethnic Serbs. He was particularly disturbed by the pervasive presence of heavily armed men and women, in and out of uniform, in Banja Luka, despite the claim by local authorities that the area was "at peace". UNPROFOR military officials from many different countries as well as representatives of international humanitarian bodies repeatedly drew attention to the dangers inherent in having large numbers of persons assume military functions without adequate training, and without a proper command structure. The wide distribution of weapons among the population greatly facilitates the tactics used to terrorize people in order to promote ethnic cleansing, such as shooting at houses and blowing them up.

45. In Vukovar, UNPROFOR informed the mission of the difficulties they encountered in trying to implement an agreement that the so-called "civil defence units" would be disarmed. At first, their members were transformed into so-called "Special Police". When objections were raised the members of the Special Police became members of the ordinary police. This situation still prevailed at the time of the visit. According to UNPROFOR, only 10 to 15 per cent of the police force in Vukovar has any professional training for

this function. Incidents of intimidation (shooting of homes at night, or blowing them up) and more serious crimes, including killings by unknown persons, continue to occur with some regularity in this area. The UNPROFOR civilian police investigate such crimes and turn the evidence over to the local police for action. The failure of the local police to take effective action to investigate such reports is a serious problem affecting not only Vukovar, but also other UNPAs as well.

46. In effect, there appears to be a nearly total absence of the rule of law in both the UNPAs and in large parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina, with many decisions being taken on a purely ad hoc basis by local civilian or military authorities. A related problem has been reported in Vukovar, where the agreement establishing UNPROFOR provides that it is to respect the local law in force; however, the legislature of "Krajina" has adopted legislation which discriminates on the basis of ethnic origin, in violation of international standards.

47. Rumours and disinformation are not only widespread, they are a crucial element of the present situation in the former Yugoslavia, greatly contributing to ethnic hatred and fuelling the desire for revenge that is one of the main causes of the atrocities which occur. With rare exceptions, the national media in all of the countries visited tend to present news concerning the conflict and human rights violations in a manner which can only be described as distorted. Consequently, the general public has no access to reliable, objective sources of information. Among the international press, there is a tendancy to emphasize the most sensationalistic aspects of the situation, thus reinforcing the distrust and tension which prolong the conflict.

D. Difficulties affecting the functioning of humanitarian organizations

48. International organizations operating in the territories of the former Yugoslavia, especially Bosnia and Herzegovina, are faced with extraordinary difficulties. The greatest difficulties are undoubtedly experienced in Sarajevo, where UNPROFOR and UNHCR offices and vehicles frequently come under attack from shelling and snipers. The ICRC ceased operations in Sarajevo after one of its representatives was assassinated. Their absence has created a serious gap in the services offered to victims of the conflict in that area, including verification of conditions of detention, tracing of missing family members and the transmission of messages between prisoners and their families. Representatives of various humanitarian bodies indicated that, while the number of international humanitarian personnel killed thus far is small, there have been numerous incidents which might have ended tragically, especially in the areas of Bosnia under the control of ethnic Serbs. On several occasions, for example, the representatives of ICRC in Banja Luka and of the civilian administration of UNPROFOR in Vukovar were threatened by gunpoint.

49. The lack of clear lines of command, the absence of the rule of law and attitudes of distrust and hostility towards international organizations often lead to situations where extensive negotiations are required before humanitarian operations can be carried out, and where the implementation of routine humanitarian operations tends to meet with unexpected obstacles and

difficulties. The net result is to diminish the efficiency of such humanitarian bodies, reducing the benefit to the populations in need. In so far as visits to persons in detention are concerned, agreements allowing ICRC unrestricted access to any place of detention are not respected, especially in Bosnian territory under the control of ethnic Serbs.

50. In territories of Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina under the control of ethnic Serbs, international organizations have repeatedly encountered special difficulties in deciding whether or not they should compromise their principles in order to avoid tragic loss of life. The forces responsible for carrying out ethnic cleansing deliberately put such humanitarian bodies in the position of either becoming reluctant accomplices to ethnic cleansing, by helping move target groups out of the area being "cleansed" to an area of safety under the control of other parties, or leaving them to their fate which according to the circumstances, may be detention, starvation or the risk of summary execution.

E. Conclusions

51. Massive and grave violations of human rights are occurring throughout the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

52. Human rights violations are being perpetrated by all parties to the conflicts. There are also victims on all sides. However, the situation of the Muslim population is particularly tragic: they feel that they are threatened with extermination.

53. Acts of violence are tolerated and often even encouraged by responsible authorities. Consequently, the rule of law does not exist.

54. The situation of people being detained in camps and staying in refugee centres is particularly dramatic.

55. The indoctrination of a large part of the population that is taking place encourages national and religious hatred.

56. In spite of the high level of commitment of the United Nations personnel - UNPROFOR and UNHCR - they are unable adequately to protect the affected population and in many circumstances are helpless to prevent violations of human rights.

57. There is an urgent need for immediate concerted action. Even when peace is achieved, serious violations of human rights are likely to continue due to the intensity of mutual distrust and hatred.

II. RECOMMENDATIONS

I.

58. The heavy weaponry on the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina should immediately be neutralized, by grouping them under the supervision of UNPROFOR if necessary. The strict implementation of agreements adopted and the principles endorsed by the London Conference in this regard is indispensable.

59. The United Nations should call upon the authorities controlling the different parts of the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina to disarm the irregular armed forces and civilians. This should be supervised by UNPROFOR.

60. The United Nations should, without delay, issue a peremptory warning to the authorities controlling the different parts of the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina that, with respect to their duty to safeguard the security of the civilian population, they may, in accordance with the norms and standards of international law, be brought to justice not only for the direct perpetration but also for the toleration of acts of atrocity, violence and other violations of human rights.

II.

61. The United Nations should continue firmly to call upon the competent authorities to abandon the policy of ethnic cleansing in all its forms. Every victim of this policy should be guaranteed the possibility of claiming his/her rights under international supervision. This should also be the case in regard to those persons who have been forced to consent to "voluntary" displacement. No norms or decisions issued by the authorities conducting the policy of ethnic cleansing can make this policy and its consequences legal.

62. There is a real possibility that the most violent forms of the policy of ethnic cleansing will spread to Kosovo, Sandzak and Vojvodina. This danger requires the immediate creation of an international mechanism to monitor the human rights situation on those territories. It would be highly advisable to secure the cooperation of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe in this respect.

III.

63. It is indispensable not only to increase the size of UNPROFOR but also to expand its mandate in three areas. First, the mandate should cover the whole territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina; second, UNPROFOR personnel should have the right to react directly to the human rights violations committed in their presence and to assist the victims; third, UNPROFOR personnel should be given the mandate to collect information and receive complaints concerning human rights violations occurring also on the territories which at present are not covered by UNPROFOR's mandate. This should include access by the UNPROFOR civilian police to places of detention. Their findings should be communicated not only to the local police but also to the competent judicial authorities.

IV.

64. The situation of persons detained in camps and remaining in centres for refugees requires prompt action. ICRC should be granted full access to all detention camps and centres, regardless of their size.

65. The full implementation of the principles endorsed and agreements adopted by the London Conference in regard to the dismantling of internment camps is necessary. However, obstacles preventing the return of the persons released from the camps to their homes must not lead to the consolidation of the situation resulting from the policy of ethnic cleansing.

V.

66. The United Nations agencies and the International Committee of the Red Cross should reinforce the efficiency of the system of information on the fate of persons who have been forcibly separated from their families. Particular care must be taken of children whose parents have been killed or who have been separated from their parents.

67. There is an urgent need to establish an investigative commission, under the auspices and in cooperation with the competent United Nations bodies, vested with the task of determining the fate of the thousands of persons who disappeared after the seizure of Vukovar as well as of other persons who disappeared during the conflicts in the former Yugoslavia. The Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances of the Commission on Human Rights may be called upon to advise and assist in this regard.

VI.

68. The establishment of an information agency independent of local authorities might help to counteract the dissemination of hatred among the population. This agency should be granted the means to operate effectively throughout the territory of the former Yugoslavia. An appeal for funds for this purpose should be made to the European Governments and other potential donors. In view of the need for long-term re-education efforts, the parties to the conflict should be obliged to ensure that the proposed agency is provided with appropriate radio and television time in Belgrade, Zagreb and Sarajevo. The proposed agency should also be able to support local media, providing that they disseminate objective information and operate in a manner so as to encourage the creation of mutual confidence between national and religious communities.

VII.

69. The need to prosecute those responsible for mass and flagrant human rights violations and for breaches of international humanitarian law and to deter future violators requires the systematic collection of documentation on such crimes and of personal data concerning those responsible.

70. A commission should be created to assess and further investigate specific cases in which prosecution may be warranted. This information should include data already collected by various entities within the United Nations system, by other intergovernmental organizations and by non-governmental organizations.

VIII.

71. The multiplicity of international activities aimed at bringing conflict and human rights violations in the former Yugoslavia to an end limits the efficiency of such efforts. Consequently, there is an urgent need for concerted international action to improve the fate of victims of human rights violations. The decisions of the London Conference, in particular the creation of the Steering Committee, is a step in this direction. Better coordination among the various United Nations agencies and bodies would also contribute to improving the efficiency of such international efforts.

72. Further implementation of the mandate of the Special Rapporteur requires the appointment of staff based in the territories of the former Yugoslavia, in order to coordinate the monitoring of human rights violations together with the other United Nations bodies mentioned above, and the creation of an adequate professional and logistical infrastructure within the Centre for Human Rights. It also requires the establishment of a working relationship with other multilateral initiatives, in particular the above-mentioned Steering Committee.

73. An urgent decision approving the creation of such an infrastructure is indispensable for the effective implementation of the mandate given the Special Rapporteur by the Commission on Human Rights. The Special Rapporteur will keep the Commission informed in this regard.

Annex I

PROGRAMME OF THE VISIT OF THE SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR ON THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN THE TERRITORY OF THE FORMER YUGOSLAVIA

Friday, 21 August 1992

Arrival at Zagreb.

Meetings with UNPROFOR and UNHCR.

Meeting with the Vice-President of Croatia and Members of the Croatian Government.

Meeting with representatives of non-governmental organizations.

Saturday, 22 August 1992

Meeting by the Special Rapporteur in Zagreb with victims and witnesses of human rights violations.

Visit by the Special Rapporteur to Varazdin refugee camp to meet newly arrived refugees from Bosnia and Herzegovina.

* * *

Meeting by the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions and the Chairman of the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention with authorities of the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina in Bihac.

Meeting by the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions and the Chairman of the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention with representatives of ICRC and UNHCR in Bihac.

Visit by the Chairman of the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention to Bihac prison and interview of prisoners.

Sunday, 23 August 1992

Visit by the Special Rapporteur to Banja Luka (Bosnia and Herzegovina) and meeting with local authorities of the "Serbian Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina".

Meeting by the Special Rapporteur with representatives of ICRC in Banja Luka.

Visit by the Special Rapporteur to Manjaca military detention camp.

Meeting by the Special Rapporteur with religious dignitaries in Banja Luka.

* * *

Meeting by the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions and the Chairman of the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention with the UNPROFOR civil affairs coordinator for UNPA-West.

Visit by the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions to Karlovac refugee camp and interview with witnesses from Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Visit by the Chairman of the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention to Bjelovar prison (Croatia) and interviews with prisoners and prison officials.

Monday, 24 August 1992

Visit to Sarajevo and meeting with the President of Bosnia and Herzegovina and members of the Government.

Meeting with local non-governmental organizations.

Visit by the Special Rapporteur to the State Hospital at Sarajevo.

* * *

Meeting by the Special Rapporteur with the President of Croatia.

* * *

Meeting by the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions and the Chairman of the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention with UNPROFOR officials in Sarajevo.

Tuesday, 25 August 1992

Visit by the Special Rapporteur and the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions to Belgrade.

Meeting with the President of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and members of the Government.

Meeting by the Special Rapporteur with the President of Serbia.

Meeting by the Special Rapporteur with political leaders of the "Serbian Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina".

Meeting with representatives of UNHCR and ICRC.

Meeting by the Special Rapporteur with leaders of opposition parties and representatives of ethnic groups from Kosovo, Vojvodina and Sandzac.

* * *

Visit of the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions to a refugee camp near Belgrade.

* * *

Meeting of the Chairman of the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention with members of the UNPROFOR civilian administration, civilian police and press officers in Zagreb.

Meeting of the Chairman of the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention with a Croatian judge in Bjelovar.

Meeting of the Chairman of the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention with representatives of the European Community Monitoring Mission Humanitarian Office in Zagreb.

Wednesday, 26 August 1992

Visit by the Special Rapporteur and the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions to Vukovar, UNPA-East.

Meetings with UNPROFOR staff (Vukovar).

Visit to the market of Vukovar, conversations with the population.

Meeting with local authorities of the "Serbian Republic of Krajina" in Vukovar.

* * *

Meeting by the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions with displaced Croatians near Vukovar.

* * *

Meeting by the Chairman of the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention with representatives of ICRC in Zagreb.

Departure for Geneva.

* * * * * * *

The Special Rapporteur wishes to thank the Chairman of the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention, Mr. L. Joinet, and the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, Mr. B.W. Ndiaye. He also wishes to express his thanks to UNPROFOR without whose logistical assistance it would not have been possible to visit so many different places in the area, to UNHCR for having facilitated meetings with local authorities outside areas controlled by UNPROFOR, and to ICRC.

Annex II

OBSERVATIONS CONCERNING THE PARTIES IN CONTROL OF THE TERRITORIES VISITED

Three separate regions are under the control of the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina, namely, part of the capital, Sarajevo; the region known as Bihac, adjacent to the border with Croatia in north-west Bosnia; and parts of central Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Much of the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina is not under the control of the recognized Government. Most observers agree that the "Serbian Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina", an unrecognized government proclaimed when Bosnia and Herzegovina declared its independence from Yugoslavia against the wishes of the Serbian population, controls between 50 and 70 per cent of the territory. The headquarters of the "Serbian Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina" is located in the city of Pale, a short distance from Sarajevo, the besieged capital of Bosnia and Herzegovina. It is comprised of four "autonomous regions", one of which, Banja Luka, was visited by the Special Rapporteur. According to the information received, the law applied within the "Serbian Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina" is the law of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, as modified by the local legislatures. There is wide agreement that the Governments of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and of Serbia exercise considerable influence over the leadership of the ethnic Serbs of Bosnia and Herzegovina. There is also some evidence that the "Serbian Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina" does not completely control all parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina in the hands of ethnic Serbs, in particular the so-called Serbian Autonomous Republic, a region in the north-eastern corner controlled by a paramilitary group called the White Eagles under the leadership of a person known by the nom de guerre of "Mauzer".

Approximately one third of the territory of Croatia is under the control of ethnic Serbs, rather than the Government of Croatia. The civilian authorities in these areas claim to form what is known as the "Serbian Republic of Krajina", an unrecognized government, and militia forces loyal to the "Serbian Republic of Krajina" control these areas. Since April 1992 these areas are under the protection of the United Nations Protective Force (UNPROFOR), which strives to control the activities of the militia. Civilian police officials attached to UNPROFOR also investigate human rights abuses, turning the information obtained over to the local police for action.

In addition to the Croatian army, two militias operate in Croatia. One, known by the acronym HOS, is the military wing of a political party known as the Croatian Right Party whose ideology is openly fascist. Although the party received only a small number of votes in recent elections, the HOS militia is reportedly large. Some observers consider that some of the most serious violations of the human rights of ethnic Serbs reported in Croatia are due to this militia.

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OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT

Triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities of the United Nations system

Note by the Secretary-General

1. The Secretary-General has the honour to submit herewith the report on the triennial policy review of the operational activities for development of the United Nations system. The report has been prepared pursuant to General Assembly resolution 44/211 of 22 December 1989 and 46/219 of 20 December 1991.

2. In its resolution 46/219, the General Assembly defined the subjects for the 1992 triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities of the United Nations system. A report was requested containing assessments of and recommendations on the reforms initiated by the Assembly in resolution 44/211. Such issues as the role of operational activities in science and technology and in human development, as well as on comprehensive training strategies were also to be covered. In response, an integrated and comprehensive methodology was developed to cover all elements of Assembly resolution 46/219 in a single report consisting of the present main document, addendum 1, containing an analysis and recommendation on science and technology, and addendum 2, providing statistical information. A central focus of the preparation of the report was to obtain a field perspective on the implementation of resolution 44/211 and on future requirements. Particular attention was given to obtaining an assessment by recipient countries of the state of current reforms of operational activities and of future needs.

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I. INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY

A. Changing operational activities

1. The triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities takes place at a critical juncture for developing countries and international development cooperation. Fundamental economic policy reforms are sweeping many parts of the world. While some developing countries have been able to achieve remarkable levels of economic growth and employment, others continue to be burdened by debt, unfavourable trade balances, high inflation and pervasive poverty. The situation is particularly difficult for very poor countries, which can often barely match economic growth with the pace of population increases. 1/

2. As noted in the World Economic Survey for 1992, world output per capita declined by over 2 per cent in 1991, following a very weak performance in 1990. 2/ This lack of economic growth has grave consequences in many parts of the world because it increases unemployment precisely at a time when a vast number of new jobs should be created to absorb young people into the labour force. The social and political consequences of these and related conditions are reverberating throughout the developing world, creating conditions of instability, extensive migration, hunger and malnutrition. The challenge for operational activities is clear: to support developing countries in their formidable task of creating economic and social opportunities for their people and of providing basic social services to the most vulnerable groups. The stakes are high: success means the productive participation of the active population in the economic and social process; inaction or failure results in violence, instability and extreme hardship.

3. The operational activities of the United Nations system, which constitute the practical means of putting into action the mandates of the United Nations system in the economic and social fields, are undergoing important changes to adapt the United Nations development system to the circumstances of the 1990s. Among the changes taking place are the reforms of operational activities initiated by General Assembly resolution 44/211, 3/ which recognized that the enhanced interdependence of the various dimensions of development that characterizes the 1990s requires greater coherence of action by all sectors of the United Nations system and new approaches to the programming of operational activities, with greater emphasis being placed on integrated and multidisciplinary support and advice. In turn, the field presence of the United Nations system must reflect these new programme requirements at the country level.

4. The operational activities of the United Nations system are thus being adapted to the new challenges and opportunities arising from the sweeping and rapid changes affecting many parts of the world. Guiding the reforms under way is the resolution's call for more integrated and coordinated programming of United Nations system cooperation; harmonization of programming processes of United Nations system programmes at country levels; a shift away from small projects to more concentrated and integrated programmes; the strengthening of

the resident coordinator system; improvements in the structure and composition of the United Nations system's presence at the country level to reflect actual programme requirements rather than the institutional structure of the United Nations system; more decentralized and strengthened capacity of the United Nations system at the country level, including delegation of authority, a country-focused approach and maximum use of national capacities; and measures to enable Governments to assume fully the execution of programmes and projects funded by the United Nations system (see paras. 15, 17, 18 and 23 of resolution 44/211).

5. The United Nations system has taken action to implement resolution 44/211 on many fronts. At the intergovernmental level, practically all bodies of the United Nations system concerned with development cooperation have taken action on various aspects of the resolution. At the level of United Nations funding programmes and agencies, the Joint Consultative Group on Policies, which comprises the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the World Food Programme (WFP) and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), has taken a series of concrete steps to implement resolution 44/211 that are reported annually to the General Assembly by the group's chair agency in the form of a statement during the consideration of operational activities. At the inter-agency level, the Administrative Committee on Coordination, in a decision adopted in 1990, recognized that resolution 44/211 was of major significance for the operational activities of the system and undertook to address its implementation in the period 1990-1992. Consideration of measures for the implementation of the resolution have since been a major focus of the agenda of the consultative committee of the Administrative Committee on Coordination dealing with operational activities.

6. Through these mechanisms, advances are being made in many areas addressed in the resolution, including the strengthening of the resident coordinator system, creating a more cohesive United Nations presence at the country level, increasing delegation of authority, achieving a better understanding of the programme approach and expanding national execution. 4/ The annual reports on operational activities provided an overview of the measures taken by the United Nations system, from the issuance of guidelines on the strengthening of the resident coordinator system to the elaboration of draft guidelines for enhancing programming processes of the United Nations system's operational activities. 5/

7. At the level of individual organizations, in spite of resource constraints, a number of initiatives further to decentralize the operational activities of the United Nations system and to implement other aspects of resolution 44/211 have been taken. Various governing bodies dealing with operational activities have taken decisions in the areas relevant to the implementation of resolution 44/211. The UNDP Governing Council in particular has taken important decisions on successor arrangements to support costs, national execution and the programme approach, which are affecting UNDP and UNFPA operations significantly, and have an important impact on executing

agencies. The Governing Council's decisions on agency support costs introduced practical measures that distinguish three main elements of programme and project support: technical support at the programme level, which relates to non-programme services; technical support at the project level; and administrative and operational support for projects. 6/ The implementation of a new support cost system and the extension of national execution create a particular set of challenges with respect to the future role of executing agencies in technical cooperation, requiring continued monitoring. On national execution too, significant decisions were taken to encourage greater use of this modality, taking into account country-specific circumstances. 7/ A number of other dimensions of General Assembly resolution 44/211 were the subject of significant actions by other intergovernmental bodies.

8. In 1992 the Secretary-General initiated the first phase of the restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations, including the creation of a new Department of Economic and Social Development. He has indicated that further steps will be taken to strengthen the economic and social sectors of the Organization. He is currently consulting with a panel of independent high-level advisers on the future course of United Nations development activities. Moreover, the Secretary-General outlined his approach to enhancing international cooperation for development and the role of the United Nations system in his report to the substantive sessions of 1992 of the Economic and Social Council. Therein, he stressed that the concept of an integrated approach to international cooperation and development lies at the heart of the Charter of the United Nations. Transforming into reality a vision of development that is people-centred, equitable and sustainable was seen by the Secretary-General as a guiding objective of the Organization's economic and social role. He further stated that:

> "I firmly believe that the focus of the United Nations must remain on the 'field', the locations where economic, social and political decisions take effect. At the same time, for action in the field to be effective, a greater measure of coordination at this level, in support of national action, is essential."

In the same context, the Secretary-General indicated that he would work vigorously for a unified United Nations presence at the country level, as a means of enhancing the impact and coherence of the overall support provided by the Organization including its programmes, and of facilitating greater system-wide cooperation. 8/

9. These concepts received strong support at the high-level segment of the substantive session of 1992 of the Economic and Social Council, as reflected in paragraph 16 of the summary of the President:

> "There was broad acceptance of the need to review the relationship between the functioning of the various parts of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields in order to optimize its impact,

efficiency and effectiveness. The importance of better coordination of United Nations activities in these areas was also stressed, with particular reference to cross-sectoral issues, including, in the framework of a unified approach at field level, the enhancement of the role and effectiveness of the resident coordinator."

10. The same session of the Council established an open-ended ad hoc working group that will develop recommendations on enhancing international cooperation for development and clarifying the role of the United Nations system. The outcome of this process will have an important and direct bearing on the future direction of operational activities within the United Nations system. The decisions adopted at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, particularly Agenda 21, will also have a major impact on the future directions of operational activities.

11. In accordance with resolution 46/219 on operational activities of the United Nations system, the present report assesses progress in the implementation of resolution 44/211 and indicates future directions for the United Nations system's operational activities, taking into account the most recent developments in this area. It focuses on the process of delivering more effectively and efficiently development cooperation through the United Nations system, and the means and mechanisms to achieve this objective.

B. Methodology

12. The assessment of the implementation of these and related dimensions of resolution 44/211 presents a formidable challenge. The priorities established by resolution 46/219 were applied throughout the entire process. The focus was on assessing country-level performance of operational activities of the United Nations system within the areas defined by the General Assembly and to determine the extent to which further policy guidance is required.

13. A fundamental fact of development cooperation on a global scale is the wide diversity of situations and requirements of developing countries. Any broad generalizations must therefore be tempered by the variety and complexity of country contexts and the diverse national requirements for United Nations system operational activities. A large number of examples have been reviewed in preparing the assessments contained in the present report. While it is not possible to bring out the specific circumstances under which these examples operate, it may be relevant to note that of the 115 countries covered for this review, 27 were currently facing special circumstances, including conditions of major unrest or the consequences of catastrophic natural events. Needless to say, operational activities in these cases must be directed primarily at meeting immediate needs, although some medium-term planning might be possible. Two thirds of the countries face especially difficult economic conditions, with over 30 countries involved in a structural adjustment programme having a major impact on the macro-policy framework under which operational activities are carried out. While the relationship of these factors to the issues covered in the present report could not be explored in depth, it is kept in mind throughout.

14. The analysis contained in the report is based on information from several sources:

(a) The findings of four expert missions to 12 developing countries carried out between 8 February and 11 March 1992. The missions were headed by experienced senior consultants. Members included some agency representatives. Discussions were held with government authorities, resident coordinators, representatives of other United Nations organizations, including international financial institutions, and bilateral donors.

(b) One hundred and one responses to questionnaires sent to all the United Nations resident coordinators and through them to the other country representatives of United Nations organizations.

(c) Written responses to a questionnaire from organizations of the United Nations system and as a result of direct Consultative Committee on Substantive Questions (Operational activities) consultations with all United Nations organizations.

(d) Seventy-one responses to a set of questions sent to Governments of both developing and developed countries.

C. SUMMARY

Principal findings

15. The principal findings arising from the assessment contained in the present report may be summarized as follows:

(a) The provisions of General Assembly resolution 44/211 remain valid. The principal ideas of that resolution constitute a solid basis for reforms in programming, full utilization of national capacities, including through national execution, decentralization and the strengthening of the resident coordinator system, and the development of a United Nations system country-level presence responsive to programme requirements; additional measures need to be taken to give full effect to the provisions of the resolution.

(b) The United Nations system has taken numerous steps to implement the resolution at the intergovernmental levels and through individual and collective secretariat action. There remain differences in understanding and application of operational concepts, such as programme approach, and different methods are being applied to give effect to operational measures, such as decentralization.

(c) The task now before the United Nations system is how best to implement more fully the central ideas of the resolution, and to take further steps to respond to the requirements of developing countries through technical support from the best sources from within and outside the United Nations

system. The crucial role and responsibilities of recipient Governments for the effective functioning of the operational activities of the United Nations system is underlined.

16. Chapter II reviews historical and international economic factors that have an impact on the availability of resources for development, including international debt, trade, environmentally sustainable development, basic human needs, international investments flows - including the transfer of technology and the institutional framework for governance of multilateral organizations. The chapter reviews the flow of official development assistance and shows that it has remained at half of the target set by the General Assembly, and provides an overview of contributions to operational activities between 1981 and 1991.

17. The recognition of the importance of human-centred development is not new, but greater attention is being paid to translating the concept into action. Chapter III briefly reviews the current role of operational activities in the area of human development. The concept has primary import for an effective integration of operational activities at the programming and implementation stages. Support for human development encompasses joint efforts of a large number of United Nations organizations to assist national and international efforts for eradicating poverty and ensuring a gamut of basic needs for all peoples as well as for generally empowering people.

18. Chapter IV describes recent programming efforts to improve the effectiveness of United Nations system operational activities. Under diverse circumstances, including the demanding conditions of structural adjustment programmes, United Nations organizations are working to achieve an integrated operational response to national priorities and strategies. The introduction of a programme - instead of a project - approach is changing how Governments, the United Nations system and all development partners (including international financial institutions and non-governmental organizations) approach coordination to achieve national objectives, whether sectoral, cross-sectoral, multidisciplinary or thematic. Some progress has been made in efforts to harmonize United Nations system programming cycles with those of Governments, to integrate multilateral non-emergency food aid with national programmes and to review and evaluate programme performance, but more progress is possible and recommendations are offered in paragraphs 84 to 94.

19. The resident coordinator system has borne the responsibility of providing team leadership in integrating and coordinating the United Nations system response to developing countries' needs. Chapter V, in addition to assessing the many responsibilities of the resident coordinator in service of the country and for the United Nations system, addresses initiatives that would further strengthen coordination of the United Nations system and enhance impact at the country level. The review indicates that further action and support of the resident coordinator system is required at the United Nations system and headquarters levels. The simplification and harmonization of administrative and programming procedures introduced for the purposes of coordination, common premises and decentralization are among the issues

discussed in this context. A range of recommendations are offered in paragraphs 133 to 146.

20. National execution is taking hold in all regions and countries. Measures to facilitate the extension of this modality are reviewed in Chapter VI. A range of current issues requiring attention are discussed, including measures to strengthen capacity to undertake execution, the simplification and adaptation of rules and procedures as well as the need to ensure accountability.

21. A great deal of attention has been given to the need for enhancing and utilizing national capacities. Effective United Nations system training efforts are essential to facilitate further involvement of nationals in programming and national execution. Chapter VII, in addition to noting the continuing shortage of trained personnel in many developing countries, outlines the potential for coordinated United Nations system training efforts for nationals and staff of the United Nations system. Nationals are being trained in procedures and requirements of the system; in project design and programme formulation; in national execution and programme management; and in substantive, thematic subjects that concern their Governments.

22. There has been special attention to the importance of the role of science and technology in the achievement of developing countries' objectives. Addendum 1 addresses recent progress as well as how science and technology can be integrated into United Nations system programming to respond to developing country requirements.

Perceptions by Governments

23. The wide variations in national priorities, capacities and conditions are reflected in governmental perceptions of the strengths and weaknesses of the United Nations system's support for development. However, beneath the diversity of views, there are a number of common denominators, some positive and some requiring more attention. The latter indicate the directions of change the United Nations system must explore in order to keep itself relevant and effective for Governments' development needs.

24. A view shared across the board by responding Governments was that the United Nations system provided a unique service through its operational activities. Its comparative advantage resulted from being apolitical, impartial and capable of operating with sensitivity in a wide variety of national circumstances. The United Nations system had an important role to play in mobilizing world public opinion in favour of developing countries. Another positive perception widely expressed was that the United Nations system offered comparative flexibility of response, especially notable in emergency situations or those requiring a quick reorientation of priorities and approach in the face of unforeseen national needs. Some Governments expressed particular appreciation for United Nations assistance received for aid coordination and for mobilization of non-system resources from governmental and non-governmental sources.

25. There is strong support by Governments for a shift to a programme approach. This approach however must be country-specific and supported by flexible United Nations system operational mechanisms. National institutions designated for managing the programmes may need to receive technical and sometimes administrative support to manage cross-sectoral and sectoral programmes as well as to achieve other linkages.

26. Some Governments continue to voice concern at the manner in which the organizations of the United Nations system approach their programming exercises. The pursuit of a more coherent response and collaborative action by the United Nations system is seen as necessary to meet national needs. Many Governments and United Nations system officials at the country level share the view that there is a need to achieve greater and more uniform authority for country-level representatives to approve and adjust programme budgets and to cooperate for a coherent system response to national programme priorities.

27. There is broad support for the strengthening of the resident coordinator system and for achieving greater coherence in the field representation of the United Nations system. The importance of United Nations system support for effective leadership by the resident coordinators was often stressed. The need for resident coordinators to have clear coordinating authority, increased clarity in United Nations system guidelines, expanded approval responsibilities and appropriate qualifications as well as the need to foster coordinated United Nations system support for the resident coordinator as team leader were also brought up by Governments. Furthermore, a number of ideas were advanced and support expressed for a more unified United Nations approach at the country level at the most recent session of the Economic and Social Council.

28. Among needs shared by most developing countries is timely and relevant external information. Governments need information specifically about technical advances and trends as well as about international developments that affect their capacity-building efforts.

29. Cumbersome procedures and wide differences in administrative regulations among organizations are perceived as other important deficiencies. There is a widely shared view that the system's overall efficiency must be enhanced and delays in providing key services reduced. There is thus considerable support for simplification and harmonization of procedures within the system, greater administrative flexibility and greater harmonization of programming cycles with those of recipient Governments.

30. Finally, national responses show a range of requirements, reflecting the national capabilities of recipient countries. There is wide demand for assistance in human resource development to strengthen the countries' capacity to manage their social and economic development. The least developed countries and countries with structural adjustment programmes in particular seek United Nations assistance to help develop economic policies and mechanisms, meet basic human needs and reduce poverty. Some Governments

attach special importance to the capacity of the United Nations system to provide objective advice, sometimes at sensitive policy levels, and to assist them in arranging round tables, national technical cooperation assessment and programmes and other processes to articulate national priorities and to determine external needs. There is a perception that the technical capacities of United Nations agencies need to be used more fully and in a more integrated manner for this purpose. At another extreme are Governments that seek to integrate the latest technologies into their national development programmes and need the United Nations system primarily for selective technical inputs.

II. RESOURCES FOR DEVELOPMENT

31. When the General Assembly declared the First United Nations Development Decade (the 1960s), it set no targets. Before the Decade was over, the need for benchmarks to measure achievement gained wide support, and when the General Assembly declared the Second United Nations Development Decade, it adopted a set of targets, including one on the desirable level of official development assistance. Each developed country was urged to provide 0.7 per cent of its GNP as official development assistance. Although levels of assistance have remained well below the set percentage, the figure of 0.7 per cent of GNP has remained an index to measure donor country performance. A number of smaller developed countries have met or surpassed the target. Overall, the flow of official development assistance has remained at half the level of 0.7 per cent of GNP set by the Assembly.

32. Other targets referring to the magnitude of official development assistance have been set with regard to the least developed countries. A number of donor countries have committed themselves to providing as official development assistance 0.15 per cent of GNP to the least developed countries. Those who have surpassed that figure have been asked to achieve a level of 0.20 per cent of GNP.

33. The debate on the magnitude of resources for development has gone well beyond discussion of the desirable level of official development assistance. It now addresses the following major issues:

(a) International debt: According to the latest available figures (1990), developing countries, as a group, owed to developed countries, commercial banks and multilateral financial institutions a total of $1.3 trillion.

(b) Trade: Developing countries lose a substantial amount of resources because of the discriminatory operation of international markets. Protectionist policies limit or block the export of some developing country products in which they have a decided competitive advantage. Textiles and a number of agricultural products are in this category. There are also tight restrictions on the export of labour itself from developing countries.

(c) Environment: As the understanding of major environmental problems has grown, it has become clear that current patterns of resource use cannot be sustained without causing irreversible and disastrous damage to the Earth's ecosystem. Documentation before the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development estimated that over the next decade developing countries would have to spend some $600 billion per year if they were to make the transition to environmentally sustainable development. Of that, $125 billion annually would have to come from external sources.

(d) Recent international developments:

(i) Recent international developments have opened the prospect that some of the approximately $1,000 billion the world spends annually for military purposes can be diverted to funds for development, and this applies to both developed and developing countries. At present, total official development assistance, both bilateral and multilateral, is some $50 billion per year.

(ii) As more market-oriented approaches are now being adopted by most developing countries, a number of developing countries have abandoned centrally planned economic models and have adopted legislative and other steps to attract foreign investment. The issues of good management and governance are now recognized as central issues in economic development. Together, these changes hold the potential for increasing the flow of resources for development and of increasing the efficiency of their application.

(e) Population: During the course of the first three United Nations Development Decades, the population of the developing world doubled, growing from two billion in 1960 to four billion in 1990. Rapid growth will continue throughout the Fourth Development Decade. As indicated in the International Development Strategy for the Fourth United Nations Development Decade, the 1990s will see the largest increase in the population of developing countries of any decade in history, an increase of well over 20 per cent.

(f) Development assistance and basic needs: In 1988-1989, only 6.5 per cent of total bilateral official development assistance went to programmes in the "human priority" areas of basic education, primary health care, supply of safe drinking-water, sanitation, family planning and nutrition. Multilateral aid during the same period provided 9.9 per cent to the same programme areas. It has been indicated that the 10 countries with over 70 per cent of the world's poor people receive only a quarter of global aid.

(g) Investment flows:

(i) The total stock of world foreign direct investment tripled in the 1980s, growing from $500 billion in 1980 to over $1.5 trillion in 1990. Investment flows to developing countries have increased by about 16 per cent annually since 1984. Asia attracts the majority

of investment inflows to developing countries, about 61 per cent; Latin America and the Caribbean account for about 32 per cent; and flows to Africa have remained at low levels, 7 per cent. According to The World Investment Report 1991, global outflows have expanded at an unprecedented annual rate of 30 per cent a year since the early 1980s, three times faster than the growth in world exports and four times the growth of world output. Seeking to tap into this major new source of growth, some 30 economies from the developing regions and Central and Eastern Europe liberalized their foreign investment regimes in 1990.

(ii) Foreign investment encompasses the transfer of technology and know-how, and the development of managerial and technical skills. The broad sectoral shift over the last five decades from mining, plantation agriculture and public utilities to light manufacture of labour-intensive products and services, offers enormous opportunities for employment and technological innovation, including the generation and assimilation of new technologies. It is an area where the United Nations system's focus on building human capacities can play a strategic role in increasing and improving the quality of resources for development.

(h) Institutional framework: As a number of studies have pointed out, the institutional framework, particularly governance of the current multilateral system for development cooperation, despite its obvious strengths in channelling multisectoral and politically untied aid for development, is in need of further strengthening. This subject was addressed on a preliminary basis at the most recent session of the Economic and Social Council and will be reviewed, inter alia, in the context of the ad hoc open-ended working group of the Council.

34. The achievement of a genuine international consensus on new approaches to development cooperation should be an integral part of the process of restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic and social fields. The process should result in improvements in the effectiveness of operational activities and lead to a greater mobilization of resources available for development. As more resources are channelled through the United Nations system and as the reforms of operational activities proceed, significant portions of these new resources can be put to more effective use.

35. The table below illustrates contributions to United Nations system operational activities for the past 10 years. Additional statistical data is contained in addendum II.

36. Grant expenditures on operational activities through the United Nations system are given in nominal terms. The table does not present the full picture on the contributions to operational activities provided through the United Nations system, which, in addition to development-related grants that are shown, includes non-concessional loans from the World Bank, regional development banks and related financial institutions, and refugee,

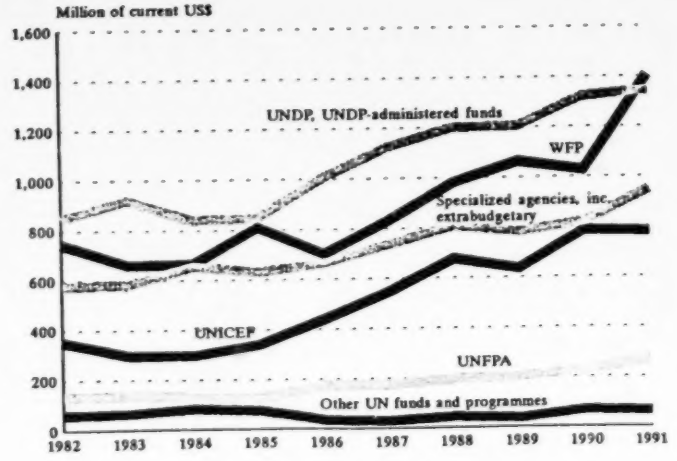
Contributions in nominal terms from Governments and other sources for operational activities of the United Nations system and percentage change over the previous year: 1982-1991

(Million of current US dollars)

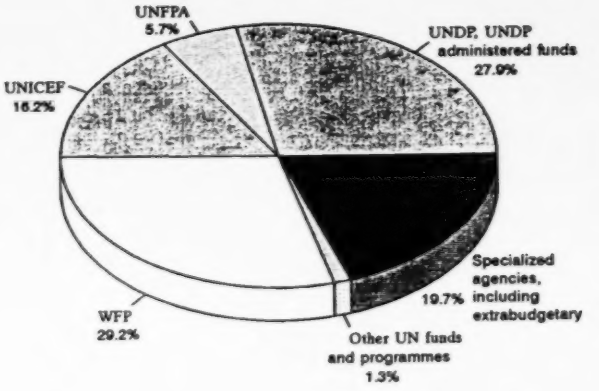
	1982	%	1983	%	1984	%	1985	%	1986	%	1987	%	1988	%	1989	%	1990	%	1991	%
1. Contributions to UNDP and UNDP administered funds	847.6	12	921.1	9	840.5	(9)	847.9	1	1 006.8	19	1 125.8	12	1 201.9	7	1 205.1	0	1 321.4	10	1 345.3	2
2. Contributions to UNFPA	134.4	6	136.0	1	131.2	(4)	128.2	(2)	174.3	36	175.0	0	195.8	12	203.7	4	227.8	12	272.6	20
3. Contributions to UNICEF	352.1	35	296.8	(16)	297.9	0	340	14	440.2	29	547.5	24	676.8	24	635.8	(6)	785.7	24	781.6	(1)
4. Contributions to other United Nations funds and programmes	59.7	86	62.4	5	81.9	31	73.8	(10)	33.9	(54)	29.4	(13)	43.9	49	35.7	(19)	66.8	87	63.1	(6)
5. Contributions to WFP	745.0	10	661.1	(11)	663.5	0	809.4	22	701.1	(13)	832.1	19	981.3	18	1 064.6	8	1 029.1	(3)	1 404.6	36
6. Contributions for operational activities of specialized agencies, including extrabudgetary	577.9	17	583.7	1	656.1	12	630.9	(4)	665.4	5	736.3	11	808.8	10	783.3	(3)	821.4	5	948.6	15
Total	2 716.7	16	2 661.1	(2)	2 671.1	0	2 830.2	6	3 021.7	7	3 446.1	14	3 908.5	13	3 928.2	1	4 252.2	8	4 815.8	13

Source: Comprehensive statistical data on operational activities for development for the year 1991 (A/46/206/Add.4,E/1991/93/Add.4) and data for statistical addendum for 1992 report.

Contributions from Governments and other sources for operational activities of the United Nations system



Contributions from Governments and other sorces for operational activities of the United Nations system 1991



humanitarian and special economic assistance and disaster relief. The exceptional increases for WFP and extrabudgetary contributions between 1990 and 1991 are attributable to unique circumstances arising from significant additional resources provided by international non-governmental organizations to meet emergency situations.

III. HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

37. By paragraph 27 of its resolution 46/219, the General Assembly reaffirmed the importance of human development and requested the inclusion in the present report of an assessment and appropriate recommendations for strengthening the support given by the operational activities of the United Nations system to sectors vital for human development. The role of operational activities in human development is briefly analysed in this chapter.

38. The recognition that human development is important is not new. All development effort, whether national, bilateral or multilateral, has been traditionally justified on the grounds that it will improve the lives of people. However, the theory has not always made itself felt in policy and practice. At national and international levels, the focus on human development remains inadequate. Just as developing countries have not been able to make their needs felt as an imperative in shaping global economic priorities, the poorer sections of the population have not been able to do so at the national level.

39. The affluent sections of any community, whether among or within nations, have the skills and institutions to ensure their own well-being. The poor do not. The essence of the new focus on human development in the United Nations system is that it is directed at providing the poor with the means to improve their condition. At the most basic level, this means improving their access to a sufficiency of food, water, housing, health and essential services such as education and health, including family planning. Beyond that, it means empowering them to improve their technical skills, conserve their environment, enlarge their intellectual world, protect their own human rights and ensure good governance.

40. Human development is a concern that relates to the mandates and functions of a large number of United Nations system organizations. Many of them can look back to a long record of support to human development. Mention should be made of the work of the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the World Health Organization (WHO), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), UNICEF, UNDP, UNFPA, IFAD, the regional commissions and the World Bank. Support to developing countries in establishing capacity for human and institutional growth has been a major feature of United Nations system development activities.

41. For the United Nations system, the concept of human development also offers a renewed basis for integrating sectoral inputs around common goals and

strategies in support of national policies. Horizontal and cross-sectoral linkages within the system can be strengthened within a generally acceptable conceptual framework. Moreover linkages can be established between private and public sectors. The availability of resources for development on a predictable basis can be comprehensively and meaningfully addressed.

42. Cross-sectoral dimensions have been added to the concept of human development as increasingly reflected in the operational activities of the United Nations system. For example, UNDP and UNICEF, in collaboration with other agencies (notably UNESCO, ILO and UNFPA) are providing assistance to Governments in the preparation of country strategies for human development that place social concerns on a par with economic growth concerns. UNICEF is also assisting a large number of countries in the design of comprehensive action programmes for children as follow-up to the World Summit for Children in 1991. WHO has supported initiatives in a number of countries to examine the macro-development aspects of health strategies. UNFPA is assisting in several countries in the design of comprehensive population programmes and strategy exercises following the Amsterdam Declaration, including strategies, for example, for population planning and safe motherhood on an inter-agency basis. The Joint Consultative Group on Policies has devoted two high-level meetings to human development, one dealing with overall concerns of more people-centred development and the other on poverty. Inter-agency efforts are under way to examine pragmatic, practical ways of strengthening national capacity in the areas of human development statistics, which could facilitate more integrated planning, budgeting and monitoring of economic and social objectives.

43. The renewed emphasis on human development offers opportunities for operational activities, especially in the context of the move to the programming approach and national execution. The United Nations system can now focus on interrelated issues in sectors such as health, education, population, nutrition and shelter, involving a wide range of institutions. The United Nations system is increasingly working on the basis of a programme approach in support of national strategies, by moulding inter-agency cooperation around people-centred goals and strategies. They constitute a sound foundation for achieving a more concerted and coherent approach.

44. Further, the new approach to human development holds out the possibility of true cooperation on a range of critical priorities, including the alleviation of poverty, building technical capabilities and promoting environmentally sustainable growth within the context of increased national security and more equitable economic relationships between rich and poor. Such a compact could be one of the aims of the World Social Summit proposed by the Economic and Social Council in its decision 1991/30.

IV. PROGRAMMING

A. Changing context

45. Responsibility for the design and management of development cooperation rests primarily with Governments (see para. 2 of General Assembly resolution 44/211). The role of the United Nations system is to support national authorities in articulating strategies and mobilizing resources. In the context of changing roles in the partnership between Governments and the United Nations system and the tripartite relationship among Governments, funding and executing agencies, shifts are taking place in United Nations system assistance, from executing projects to providing policy advisory support and technical support at the early stages of strategy formulation. The functioning of the United Nations system is changing as a result of country-level requirements and greater capacity at the national level.

46. The increased importance being attached to policy concerns of a multidisciplinary nature in operational activities has important implications for the future functioning of the system. It will require the coordinated mobilization of substantive technical skills and capacities in a full range of social and economic fields, from national and international sources. Furthermore, it will require an intimate knowledge of local conditions and institutions and an ability to work closely with them.

47. Overall, the growing trend towards multidisciplinary policy work of the United Nations system is inspired by such concerns as the focus on the human dimension in development. It reflects the belief that development is a continuum that ranges from poverty eradication and meeting basic needs to the development of the highest skills, and the realization by societies of their full potential. In supporting that process, the direction and pace of which are set by national strategies and policies, operational activities are guided by the immutable standards of the Charter of the United Nations and other universal instruments.

48. The unique strengths of the United Nations system are being mobilized through a collaborative response in support of national strategies in human development, poverty eradication, sustainable development, population and other social and economic priorities. Issues connected with this collaboration were reviewed at the recent session of the Economic and Social Council, in both the coordination and operational activities segment. A number of concrete suggestions were contained in the statement by the President of the Council concluding the coordination segment on collaboration in the eradication of poverty and in the United Nations system response to the HIV/AIDS pandemic, including:

(a) Preparation of a common specific strategy on how the United Nations system can work together to help alleviate poverty; such a strategy should be prepared under the overall leadership of the resident coordinator;

(b) The Bretton Woods institutions and the rest of the United Nations system should collaborate more closely to ensure that poverty alleviation is

incorporated in the design and implementation of structural adjustment programmes;

(c) The analytical capacity within the United Nations system needs to be more closely linked with country-level operational capacities of the system;

(d) In response to the HIV/AIDS pandemic the United Nations organizations should continue to develop detailed proposals on mechanisms for country-level coordination that would strengthen the host Government's coordination capacity;

(e) Effective in-country coordination of technical cooperation should be made a priority objective for all funds and agencies providing assistance for HIV/AIDS activities. The role of the resident coordinator should be strengthened in this regard.

These and other priority issues require more effective modalities of cooperation at the country level by the United Nations system.

49. Stringent policies in effect during structural adjustment programmes in many countries had an important impact upon the results emanating from the United Nations system programming experience such as in human development. Governments under structural adjustment programmes or similar arrangements often seek United Nations system support for social aspects such as programmes directed at the most vulnerable groups, children and mothers, the poor and disadvantaged.

Linkages of global, regional and country strategies

50. The United Nations system has unique strengths to help mobilize support for poverty-oriented strategies, to formulate global strategies by assessing national experiences and to provide linkages between global, regional and national goals and targets to enrich country-level efforts. The furtherance of global goals of the International Development Strategy for the Fourth United Nations Development Decade, the decisions emanating from the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, and follow-up to such internationally agreed strategies as the Declaration adopted at the eighteenth special session of the General Assembly, the Plan of Action for least developed countries, the outcome of the eighth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s, and the World Summit for Children Plan of Action, is pursued at the national level. Increasingly, international strategies in the economic and social sectors incorporate the people-centred idea of human development.

51. The country-level application through operational activities of the United Nations system of internationally mandated strategies, when appropriate, involves adaptation, increasingly under the leadership of resident coordinators, to specific local strategies, conditions and concerns of countries. The United Nations system programming experience at the

country level indicates that enhanced collaboration is required to assure that country, regional and global linkages are maximized.

52. Developing country Governments decide which external resources will help meet national needs sometimes on the basis of specific national programme frameworks. Some Governments that have engaged in major shifts in their macroeconomic policies have indicated that they expect the United Nations system to play a pivotal role in helping them accomplish formulation and application of specific development strategies. In such instances, the United Nations system may help with the preparation of special macroeconomic and/or sectoral studies, regional and/or provincial master plans and assistance with formulation or revision of national programmes. Such efforts include linkages to global strategies and catalytic bridging activities with the international financial institutions as well as preparation and organization of round tables to mobilize external resources for aid coordination.

53. The programme development process is also used as a catalyst to mobilize resources in the areas of United Nations system advocacy or for country-level, national thematic needs. Such initiatives may involve specialized agencies either utilizing their own resources, the new support cost arrangements or special UNDP or multi-bi funding. To integrate global initiatives with national needs United Nations organizations may work with the Government to produce a strategy paper and a plan of operations for the programming period, including requirements for external financing.

54. Resident coordinators indicate an increase in substantive collaboration through United Nations system regular meetings and dialogues, and various forms of exchanging information and programming data at the country level. Discussions about general programming issues of poverty, equity, population, environmental sustainability, human development and other national thematic priorities, sometimes with direct governmental involvement and/or consultations, help explore changing national needs for programming, execution, training and other collaborative actions from the United Nations system.

Cooperation mechanisms and multidisciplinary advice

55. A number of efforts to achieve greater cooperation are taking place, including collaborative programming, harmonization of cycles and consultation about new or ongoing programmes and projects leading to useful joint activities. In the areas of disaster relief, emergency assistance, population and rural development, among others, many examples of successful collaboration exist at the country level. Plans often have been adopted to strengthen the day-to-day functioning of the United Nations system at the country level: informal meetings and workshops are often held to achieve greater coherence and integration of United Nations assistance, sometimes utilizing lead agencies for specific thematic or multisectoral activities.

56. Most recipient Governments consulted for the present report believe more coordination is required for the United Nations system representation in the

field to better meet their needs. They consider that the multidisciplinary advice required has not always been readily forthcoming. They welcome a leadership role for the resident coordinator on behalf of the United Nations system and express their desire to deal with him as the team leader of the United Nations. Governments' views varied depending on how the resident coordinator system was perceived to be functioning currently in relation to different degrees of centralization of aid coordination by the Government. A few countries stressed that the resident coordinator's role should not hinder their maintaining direct channels of communication with individual agencies.

57. In a few countries, some United Nations organizations have reorganized their staffing capabilities to correspond better to programme needs. Some United Nations organizations' headquarters are reorganizing capabilities to respond better to multidisciplinary needs. Governments may require policy advice at the macroeconomic and multisectoral policy levels relating to economic and social reforms, human development, management reforms, macroeconomic planning, the development of long-term strategies, management of the economy, economic restructuring and/or socio-economic programmes.

58. There is a need for better access to key research and analytical information from the United Nations system in keeping with national requirements. The United Nations field system needs to develop access by developing countries to data banks and other information systems of the United Nations organizations in relation to local requirements. Governments also mention the need to reduce duplication in written information, provided by the United Nations system.

Support costs

59. While it is too early to assess new support cost arrangements, significant programming achievements are expected from the planned linkages between the new UNDP support cost facility (TSS-1) and related agency regular programme activities as well as from linkages between these joint activities and a number of programme development activities planned under special programme resources of UNDP. Although the new system only took effect in June 1992, executing agencies are concerned that the broader new arrangements on support costs involving technical advisory services for programming and project specific efforts at the national level may in fact limit the agencies' future capacity to provide advice to developing countries for lack of resources. This matter will undoubtedly be reviewed in the context of the evaluation foreseen by the UNDP Governing Council in 1994 in accordance with its decision 1992/22, paragraph 24.

B. Integrated operational response

60. A country's macroeconomic framework and/or development strategies form the basis for the determination of its sectoral priorities and programmes. An integrated national programme framework setting out cooperation requirements of the organizations of the United Nations system, as per paragraph 17 (a) of

resolution 44/211, currently exists in very few countries. Instead, government strategies in most countries are articulated in medium-term national development frameworks or occasionally in policy framework papers. Structural adjustment programmes prepared in collaboration with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank are sometimes a Government's only programme framework. Policy documents, when they exist, vary in content, detail and timing periods. Round tables, consultative groups and national technical cooperation assessment and programmes constitute existing mechanisms for the development of integrated operational responses at the country level, particularly to the extent that the relevant United Nations system organizations, including the World Bank, can make their technical capacities available.

61. Coordination arrangements for programme development need to be particularly responsive to the diversity of situations and requirements in developing countries as expressed by national Governments. In some countries, special internal circumstances require United Nations system support primarily to meet immediate humanitarian needs. Elsewhere, sectoral or subsectoral interests, structural adjustment programmes or ad hoc projects may prevail. The nature of the United Nations response to national priorities varies from a number of single agency initiatives to programming of thematic, multisectoral and multi-agency exercises, including round tables or consultative groups, strategy development documents or advisory notes.

62. For a number of years, the United Nations system has successfully assisted a number of developing countries in establishing planning and management mechanisms for aid coordination. Round-table meetings, which include representatives of donor countries, have involved the preparation of technical studies to help formulate sectoral plans and may elaborate foreign assistance required. National technical cooperation assessment and programmes, which are designed to strengthen the aid management machinery in the country, involve national authorities in identifying critical human resources needed to manage the national economy and to strengthen national capacity, improve the country's capability to avoid undue donor-driven interests and provide the national framework and the strategic priorities to which future technical cooperation, irrespective of the source of aid, should contribute.

63. Practically all United Nations organizations are involved in some type of programme development work and a number of positive examples of system collaboration at programming stages exist. To achieve the goal of coordinating an "integrated response" to national needs at the country level, a system-wide consensus, particularly with effective headquarters directives on United Nations programming coordination at the country level, is needed.

Programming responsiveness

64. As mentioned earlier, Governments continue to voice concern regarding the need to improve coordination of some of the programming exercises and express the wish to have a more coherent system response to their national

priorities. None the less, many examples of collaborative programming efforts by the United Nations system exist that can serve as models or be adapted to other countries.

65. Typically, using a lead agency concept with a cluster or group of agencies organized to respond to a specific thematic need 9/ has enabled United Nations system programming collaboration to advance in the majority of developing countries. The initiative for organizing and managing these arrangements usually rests with the resident coordinators with the concurrence, and sometimes participation, of national authorities. This process involves a series of collaborative programming activities ranging from needs assessment, preparation of an integrated note on the United Nations response to a specific priority, to the elaboration of programme elements. Typically, the process is led by an individual having particular professional and technical competence. Where a dynamic resident coordinator, government leadership, and willing United Nations partners have been available, it has been possible to mobilize the system in a coordinated manner.

66. The lead agency concept applied within the resident coordinator system involves thematic, multidisciplinary groups, convened and chaired by appropriate United Nations organizations or by the resident coordinator. Inter-agency group tasks include:

(a) Sharing information and identifying key officials in government and relevant counterparts in bilaterals and the non-governmental organizations with similar thematic interests;

(b) Developing sectoral strategies;

(c) Identifying inter-agency connections and multilateral, bilateral and non-governmental organization funding possibilities;

(d) Selecting areas of concentration for the United Nations system;

(e) Producing a thematic strategy paper for United Nations activities or a joint note for common action for the next phase;

(f) Collaborating for United Nations programming.

C. Programme approach

67. Progress in the shift from a project to a programme approach is widely welcomed by recipient and donor countries. Experience within the United Nations system ranges from a long tradition of using the programme approach to a legislative mandate by WFP of applying the project approach. The programme approach, when adapted to specific country requirements, can be an effective means for achieving greater coherence and impact and can sharply reduce the bureaucratic burdens associated with a large number of projects. There is, however, still a need to clarify concepts and to take steps to further enhance coherent United Nations system action.

68. With respect to General Assembly resolutions 44/211 and 46/219, the Governing Council at its thirty-ninth session (May 1992) encouraged UNDP's continuation of consultations with Governments and specialized agencies on formulation of guiding principles that would support national organizations at the programme level to assess and enhance capacities and in formulation and implementation of cross-sectoral, sectoral and subsectoral development programmes. 10/ Further United Nations system consultations on the programme approach are scheduled at the next session of the Consultative Committee on Substantive Questions (Operational activities) in September 1992.

69. Depending upon individual country situations the United Nations system may assist in needs assessments and situation analyses leading to the articulating of a strategy. Experience of some organizations indicate that the progression in needs assessment is basically along the following lines although there is no clear-cut division between the categories:

(a) National development plans or priorities are generally cast in broad terms and classified by economic sectors or by themes; the first necessity is for the Government to predetermine national priorities that need external cooperation;

(b) These broad formulations are then defined and explained in further detail so that the constraints and weaknesses can be clearly perceived;

(c) An identification of the required improvement or expansion in existing arrangements is outlined, including new initiatives, taking into account past experience;

(d) A further choice is then exercised as to the priority areas where operational activities can best be applied;

(e) Formulation of specific programmes for assistance are evolved from priority requirements.

70. The effectiveness of the programme approach is a function of the degree of integration with the goals and structures of the Government. The programme approach needs to be sensitive to participatory concepts of planning and facilitate the United Nations system horizontal cooperation among sectoral ministries and subsectoral units. Experience shows that the programme approach requires decentralization and adequate technical capacity at the field level. United Nations system assistance for the programme approach must fully respond to national efforts to evaluate how best to utilize United Nations strengths to meet country-level requirements.

71. Review of country-level data indicates that the substantive capacity and leadership of the resident coordinator supported by the technical competence of the United Nations system will be increasingly important in ensuring the successful collaborative use of the programme approach by the system. To give effect to the programme approach, some United Nations system country teams are being organized in subgroups, sometimes using the lead agency concept

described earlier, corresponding to national programme themes. National and international technical specialists may be financed under the new support cost arrangements or through other funding arrangements from the United Nations system and other sources to supplement the resources of the country teams. For a number of themes, United Nations organizations have extensive technical capacity available that may need to be organized in a manner to meet country-level programme requirements.

D. Harmonization and adaptation of programming cycles

72. Some progress, under the auspices of the Joint Consultative Group on Policies, has been made in the harmonization and adaptation of programming cycles of UNDP, UNICEF and UNFPA to the planning periods of some Governments. Such adaptation has been fully achieved for 30 countries. Adaptation to government cycles was not possible in at least 18 countries, because Governments did not have a formal planning period and, in at least 6 other countries, Governments had a one-year budget cycle. Thus, in almost one quarter of the countries immediate adaptation to national cycles is not possible. In another group of countries, the adaptation of programming cycles to national cycles was not undertaken, owing to the perception that existing planning cycles established at Headquarters could not be modified. Many country-level officials, both from Governments and the United Nations system, noted that further harmonization of policies with respect to programming cycles among members of the Joint Consultative Group on Policies and other United Nations organizations should lead to more progress at the country level. While progress has been made in the adaptation and synchronization of programming cycles there is potential for additional progress through the efforts of the Group. In this respect about 60 per cent of the resident coordinators report that plans exist for further adaptation (including for other United Nations system organizations and some bilaterals) to government cycles.

73. Other countries operate under a structural adjustment framework involving a three-year rolling cycle. Resolution 44/211 also called for consideration to the introduction of budgetary cycles on a rolling-cycle basis. In approximately one third of the countries at least one United Nations organization reported using funding cycles on a rolling-cycle basis. Of this group, about 80 per cent stated that such efforts could be the basis for wider United Nations system application.

E. Integration of multilateral non-emergency food aid with national programmes

74. General Assembly resolution 44/211, paragraph 17 (e), contained a recommendation that non-emergency food aid channelled through the United Nations system should be programmed coherently so as to ensure its full integration with the development programmes of government. As the only agency in the system handling significant amounts of non-emergency food aid, WFP was

invited to recommend steps to bring about the greater integration of food aid with the other assistance provided by United Nations agencies.

75. WFP's development project food aid has a number of characteristics of note. Apart from its value, in excess of $530 million per annum in recent years, it is directed to poor people in low-income, food-deficit countries, either transferring additional resources to specific beneficiaries or supplementing the budgets of particular government development activities. Acting as an incentive to promote school attendance, encouraging afforestation and mitigating the social costs of structural adjustment are but three of a whole range of development activities that are undertaken with project food aid. However, the particular nature of that aid requires significant complementary financial, managerial, logistical and technical inputs often beyond the resources of both WFP and the Governments it supports. Harnessing project food aid with financial and technical assistance from other sources within the United Nations system and from bilateral donors is necessary for the proper integration of WFP project food aid with government development programmes.

76. Based on the special review undertaken by WFP on this subject, WFP presented various recommendations at the thirty-third session of the Committee on Food Aid, Policies and Programmes in May 1992. Actions proposed to bring WFP development assistance into the mainstream of development assistance planning include the following:

(a) WFP will move towards a country programming process based on progressive improvements on the content and format of its country strategy outlines. Greater involvement of Governments and United Nations and bilateral organizations in the formulation of country strategies will be an important element in the revised process. WFP's current approach to the design and implementation of its development activities already embraces most of the essential characteristics of the programme approach as it is generally accepted within the United Nations system.

(b) WFP and UNDP will explore the opportunities for establishing further UNDP-funded "umbrella projects" for technical assistance support to WFP-assisted projects in individual countries.

(c) WFP will expand its use of the existing facility for including cash provision in project budgets for enhanced project preparation and for monitoring, reporting and evaluation.

(d) Efforts will be made to strengthen personal contacts between WFP officers preparing food-assisted development projects and their counterparts in other organizations.

(e) To help counter the misconceptions and lack of understanding that prevail about project food aid, WFP will disseminate information on the successful application of project food aid in various countries, and point to the opportunities existing in other countries. This can be done through

periodic seminars in recipient countries and such inter-agency bodies as the Joint Consultative Group on Policies and the Consultative Committee on Substantive Questions (Operational activities). UNDP-sponsored round tables and World Bank-sponsored consultative groups, to which WFP is invited, provide other forums for the presentation of specific ideas for the use of project food aid.

F. Programme performance, audit and evaluation

77. According to country-level data, about 30 per cent of the Governments systematically review, appraise and coordinate United Nations system programmes and projects to reduce duplication and ensure complementarity.

78. There is general agreement that programme accountability should focus more on results than inputs. A number of resident coordinators referred to the inadequacy of current United Nations audit procedures to assess efficiency, impact and sustainability of programmes and projects. Moreover, information reviewed from all sources indicates that the United Nations system often relies on financial reporting to appraise programme performance and accountability.

79. There are differing views about the application of the concept of sustainability. Many at the field level indicate that assessment of sustainability should be a precondition to formulation and implementation while others consider it as necessary for post-project follow-up, audit and review. It is acknowledged that sustainability depends upon United Nations system responsiveness to and integration with national activities and the national ability and willingness to commit resources during the course of implementation.

80. Many Governments believe that the United Nations system should help anticipate how continued impact will be achieved beyond the programme implementation stage. Additionally, some believe that historically there has been too much reliance on short-term measures, particularly United Nations system financing of inputs, which should be a normal part of government participation. Moreover, recipient Governments suffering economic hardships indicate national funding is often scarce and that greater flexibility by the United Nations system is required.

81. Programme accountability is an integral feature of United Nations system operational activities that has been addressed by the General Assembly in an effort to assure impact of the United Nations system response to national requirements. With current decentralization of greater authority and responsibility to the country level, both to country offices and to recipient Governments (especially for national execution), accountability for actual performance remains of primary importance for programme functions including the following:

(a) Periodic reviews of operational performance to assess impact;

(b) Monitoring and evaluation, including through the successor arrangement to support costs;

(c) Increased attention to non-financial aspects;

(d) Identification and utilization of quantifiable objectives, benchmarks and other performance criteria;

(e) Post-project evaluation to assess impact, including performance criteria.

82. In recognition of the special responsibility of the United Nations system for technical monitoring and backstopping, UNDP has established new support cost arrangements (TSS-2). UNFPA also established new support cost arrangements to improve performance and transparency. The five largest executing agencies of the United Nations system noted at the recent session of the Economic and Social Council (operational activities segment) that very few TSS-2 provisions were being included in new projects. UNDP stressed that two principal factors needed to be considered at this time: the new system became effective only in June 1992 and the transition to the fifth programming cycle in 1992 produced a typical reduction in project approvals during the start-up phase. The application of these arrangements in improving performance will thus need to be monitored closely.

83. The United Nations system achievement of further simplification and harmonization of procedures in order to enable developing country Governments to focus resources on substantive aid coordination tasks is essential. Although about two thirds of United Nations organizations report initial steps to simplify and adapt procedures to national situations, the majority of country-level data point to the fact that current United Nations system procedures are not conducive to harmonization and greater national participation. Progress is also needed to achieve harmonization of United Nations system procedures in management audits. Work initiated by the Joint Consultative Group on Policies and the Department of Economic and Social Development with regard to simplification and harmonization of financial accountability may provide the basis. Additionally, country-level United Nations system officials indicated the need for well-trained, objective external specialists to be involved in project and programme evaluation to assure impartiality and a common approach. Moreover, the introduction of the programme approach and national execution makes it essential to take a fresh look at the existing procedures. For example, there is increasing recognition that during implementation a programme approach requires particular attention to monitoring and effective accountability.

G. Recommendations on programming

United Nations system country strategy note

84. The requirements of the 1990s demand increased inter-agency cooperation and integration of the United Nations system's programmes with national strategies, which are increasingly of a cross-sectoral nature. The United Nations system should apply more effective and integrated programming modalities that will enable the provision of multisectoral support to address the priorities selected by developing countries.

85. An integrated United Nations system operational response to national priorities under the leadership of a strengthened resident coordinator system should be achieved whenever required by local circumstances. Successful initiatives in collaborative programming can serve as a basis for application elsewhere. A United Nations system country strategy note should be prepared, which indicates the contribution the United Nations system could make in support of national priorities established by the Government, with particular focus on capacity-building. Among the elements of such a note would be a brief assessment in the areas of concern, including institutional and human resource constraints, an analysis of technical cooperation and capacity-building, and a broad framework within which future United Nations system programmes might be developed. It would present options to the Government. The focus should be on priority strategies and goals in which collaborative efforts of the United Nations system are likely to have an impact. It should be prepared in full consultation with the Government and be mindful of the primary responsibility of the Government. The Consultative Committee on Substantive Questions (Operational activities) in 1991 developed an initial set of guidelines that could serve as a starting-point, taking into account experience acquired at the country level.

86. The country strategy note should serve as a reference point for the country programmes and projects of United Nations system organizations, making full use of existing programming processes of individual organizations and of all relevant data and studies. It should be available to relevant governing bodies when reviewing country programmes. The trends emerging from an analysis of the country strategy notes could be reviewed periodically by the General Assembly, Economic and Social Council or other appropriate central bodies, bearing in mind the outcome of current discussion on the governance of operational activities.

87. While organizations of the United Nations system would retain full accountability to their respective intergovernmental body for the resources put at their disposal, their country programmes and projects should be coordinated within the framework of a strategy document and their programming cycles should be harmonized and adapted to national requirements.

88. The analytic and research capacities of the United Nations system will need to be made more systematically available to country-level operational activities on the basis of specific country requirements, including for

preparation of the country strategy document. Moreover, effective communication systems, coordination mechanisms among the United Nations organizations and increased access to data banks of the United Nations system will need to be achieved to support the integrated effort at the country level.

89. In pursuing the strengthening of collaboration in programming, successful initiatives should be used to achieve a more concentrated and focused use of United Nations system resources and to achieve greater impact.

Programme approach

90. The programme approach is emerging as a central modality to concentrate United Nations system cooperation on key national priorities in an integrated fashion. The key elements that have emerged in the assessment are:

(a) The programme approach is an integral part of a national effort.

(b) The national organization charged with the management of the programme needs to have the capacity to develop and implement cross-sectoral programmes, and the United Nations system may need to provide support in this respect.

(c) United Nations system support needs to focus on clearly identified needs and goals that represent priorities of the recipient countries, around which United Nations cooperation and coordination can be organized, monitored and evaluated.

(d) New operational tools and mechanisms need to be tailored to country requirements, including access to technical capacity on a rapid and flexible basis, in accordance with programme requirements. Well coordinated advice from a wide variety of sources, national and international, including from other developing countries through TCDC and other means, needs be at the disposal of recipient Governments.

91. In order to ensure a systematic and effective application of the programme approach, the following will need to be taken into account:

(a) At the United Nations system level, a better understanding should be achieved of the diverse concepts and practical requirements of the programme approach, building on the experience of United Nations organizations that have practised it with success to facilitate collaboration. To this end, fuller agreement on terminology, concepts and practices will be developed in the context of work being carried out at the Joint Consultative Group on Policy and the Consultative Committee on Substantive Questions (Operational activities).

(b) At the country level, the programme approach must be first of all a nationally managed effort; clear strategies and goals with broad national support and appropriate national structures are essential to facilitate the development and implementation of integrated programmes; when required, the

United Nations system can p ovide the support in developing national strategies.

(c) Support to the Governments for the development and implementation of a programme approach must be available flexibly through a variety of sources. The expertise of United Nations organizations is particularly important. It can be supplemented by support available from the United Nations Volunteers, TCDC, non-governmental organizations, national or international private sector firms and universities. Information on these sources must be available to national Governments by developing rosters and databases locally.

Harmonization and adaptation of programming cycles

92. Some progress has been achieved in synchronizing all programming cycles of United Nations funds and programmes, and adapting them to national requirements. Further progress should be achieved particularly on the basis of work being done by the Joint Consultative Group on Policy, by establishing an agreed plan and by stressing substantive, thematic collaboration. Under the Joint Consultative Group on Policy subgroup on harmonization a rapid extension of programme synchronization should be accomplished with a target of doubling the number of countries from one third to two thirds in the near future. Moreover, substantive collaboration of organizations of the Joint Consultative Group on Policy and other concerned organizations in the eradication of poverty will be carried out in a few countries by convening all responsible officials to agree on a plan for collaborative action. This initiative will serve as a basis for future wider application of the lessons acquired.

93. Most countries are adopting national strategies instead of traditional planning approaches. These strategies are updated periodically in line with longer-term perspectives. The system's programming cycles will need to be adjusted accordingly. In this context, United Nations organizations will attempt to ensure that their programmes and projects are harmonized around common themes, keeping in view the preference of the national Governments. Furthermore, United Nations system support is often required in a flexible manner to meet rapidly emerging needs. Under these changing circumstances it is recommended that the concept of rolling budget cycles be further applied, whenever feasible, as a means of introducing flexibility in the adaptation to local requirements. 11/

Programme performance, audit and evaluation

94. Further steps should be taken to improve the assessment of impact, sustainability and self-reliance in evaluating the performance of programmes and projects. This should include:

(a) The performance of a programme or programmes in a country rather than a project should be the norm in carrying out monitoring, audit and evaluation.

(b) Greater emphasis in assessing performance should be placed on achievement in capacity-building, impact and sustainability. Revised guidelines bearing in mind these requirements, the programme approach, national execution as well as the utilization of technical specialists should be prepared and applied reflecting as far as possible a system-wide approach.

(c) Where programmes and projects of different organizations of the United Nations system are complementary at the country level, a coordinated approach to their implementation should be undertaken.

(d) In all monitoring, reporting and evaluation activities the need to build national capacity in handling these matters should be reviewed by the inter-agency working group on evaluation.

(e) Progress should be made to achieving greater harmonization of United Nations system procedures in management audits.

(f) Management audit should involve both financial audit and programme audit as distinct activities, ensuring that both lead to a fully adequate assessment as the current combined approach can lead to inadequate assessments.

V. RESIDENT COORDINATOR SYSTEM AND COUNTRY REPRESENTATION

A. Resident coordinator system

Diverse contexts and functions

95. Resident coordinators function in a variety of countries with very different requirements. It is essential to keep these country-specific variations in mind in assessing the functioning of the resident coordinator system. These important country differences notwithstanding, all resident coordinators are expected to function as team leaders for United Nations system activities, including for those organizations not represented in the country. Resident coordinators also work with multilateral and bilateral donors and, increasingly, also with non-governmental organizations and the private sector.

96. The functions of the resident coordinator are becoming more complex as the number of specialized funds has grown; increasing emphasis is placed on advocacy and global priorities, and more concern is expressed about the optimum use of resources through enhanced collaboration of the United Nations system at the country level. Moreover, requirements to develop an integrated United Nations system response to national programme frameworks, to support the formulation of a programme approach, and to support national execution place increasing responsibilities on resident coordinators. Sometimes, the need for humanitarian and emergency work takes precedence over development work. Resident Coordinators do not always have the means and support to carry out the diverse and difficult demands placed upon them.

97. There are important variations in the number and composition of the United Nations system presence at the country level. The bulk of the countries have an average of between 5 and 10 United Nations organizations present, often sharing common premises. 12/ In others, there are up to 15 or more organizations (sometimes including regional centres) while in a few only one organization is present. Sometimes there is no local representation as some countries are covered by regional offices in their respective subregions.

98. Recipient Governments play an essential part in the functioning of the resident coordinator system and for facilitating an integrated approach by the United Nations system. Considerable diversity exists with respect to recipient Governments' working relationship with resident coordinators. Developing countries have the sole responsibility for coordination of external assistance and a number have had the resources to develop systems for the purpose, while others require support in this respect. The majority of countries, including many of those with national aid coordination capacities, would like to see a greater measure of collaboration and efficiency achieved within the United Nations system under the leadership of the resident coordinator. Most developing countries and donor Governments expect the resident coordinators to play a more active leadership role in promoting coherence of the United Nations system in order to improve the efficiency of programming of United Nations system activities. Governments generally recommend appropriate strengthening of the resident coordinator system and delegation of authority to resident coordinators and other country representatives.

99. Some Governments are introducing changes to make better use of the resident coordinator system. Among the specific areas in which recipient Governments expect the resident coordinator to play a leadership role are:

(a) Capacity-building;

(b) Support in resource mobilization;

(c) Bringing all the United Nations system partners, international financial institutions and other multilateral and bilateral programmes into the programming process;

(d) Emergency, natural disaster relief and humanitarian assistance;

(e) Reduction of duplication and harmonization of administrative and reporting procedures for aid coordination.

100. It is clear that resident coordinators not only need an overall view of the United Nations system but also need to have at their disposal the necessary policy and technical support to function effectively within this complex and highly polycentric system. A more systematic United Nations system approach to supporting the functioning of the resident coordinator system at the country level is still needed. Greater attention needs to be paid to improving the functioning of the resident coordinator system as an

integrated process leading to effective analytic and technical support to developing countries.

101. Cooperation among United Nations system colleagues at the country level is generally good. Sometimes, institutional factors inhibit full and integrated collaboration. Cooperation has been achieved in a number of instances owing to good team work at the country level and the leadership of the resident coordinator. Examples of such collaboration should be used as a basis for revising periodically guidelines for the resident coordinator system.

102. Resident coordinators have been able to coordinate United Nations system actions effectively in a number of emergency situations. In these instances the United Nations system and resident coordinators have clear guidance as concerns the goals to be accomplished, and resources and technical support are also available more freely.

103. In the past few years, a number of resident coordinators, particularly in Africa, have been involved in humanitarian assistance programmes. In most cases they were asked to help plan, support and coordinate aid provided not only by the United Nations system (the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), WFP, UNDP, UNICEF, etc.), but also by bilateral and other multilateral donors. This has become almost a full-time responsibility in about 12 countries.

104. In addition to directly representing a number of organizations, the resident coordinators are also the designated officials of the Secretary-General in matters of security. As such, they are responsible for organizing the preparedness of the United Nations personnel and their families and for taking appropriate measures in the event of security problems. In a number of cases this function has taken on great importance and involves a large time commitment.

105. Typically, most agencies of the United Nations system see the resident coordinators as promoting contact and sharing information and facilitating action. They indicate that it is necessary to strengthen the resident coordinator system to enable improved support for advancing priorities in their respective areas of competence and to promote collaboration.

106. The World Bank Group maintains an expanding relationship with United Nations organizations and the potential exists for further collaboration. Cooperation between UNDP and the World Bank, the two main agencies in the system with global and multisectoral mandates, is extensive and well established. A relatively new area of United Nations system collaboration is for "adjustment lending", which forms a central part of the relationship between the World Bank and many countries in sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America. Additionally, the United Nations system participates in and contributes to World Bank-sponsored consultative groups in a number of countries and the World Bank participates in many UNDP-sponsored round tables in other countries.

United Nations system support

107. There is a clear need for higher levels of coordination, starting at headquarters level, in order:

(a) To optimize the potential of United Nations assistance for mutually supportive and complementary relationships between operational activities for development and the research and standard-setting functions of specialized agencies;

(b) To provide integrated multidisciplinary and multisectoral advice and capacity-building support to recipient Governments where required in policy, programme formulation, implementation and evaluation;

(c) To dialogue with Governments and appropriate bodies to integrate multilateral and bilateral assistance with United Nations system assistance to meet national priorities.

108. The resident coordinator system functions well with respect to common administrative, security and protocol matters, but needs strengthening in promoting programming collaboration within the United Nations system, including the setting of goals and strategies for collaborative programming, organizing of multidisciplinary teams and progress in harmonizing procedures, drawing on all relevant capacities of the United Nations system.

109. For the resident coordinator system to function properly it needs better access to the technical capacity of the United Nations system, including technical consultancies and support staff, that would enable it to perform the development coordination functions more effectively. This should include ready access to national expertise and authority to hire locally, in collaboration with relevant United Nations organizations, technical personnel for multidisciplinary teams.

110. The annual report on operational activities for 1991 proposed an additional funding source at the disposal of resident coordinators to finance consultants and support staff to help them perform more effectively their system-wide functions. This additional source is viewed as a priority by practically all resident coordinators. While some have access to financial support from UNDP (average about $65,000 per country), the vast majority indicated that they required additional funding on the average of $50,000 annually.

Consultative Committee on Substantive Questions (Operational activities) guidelines

111. General Assembly resolution 46/219, paragraph 23 (a), requested an assessment of the impact of the existing guidelines on the team leadership role of the resident coordinator prepared by the Consultative Committee on Substantive Questions (Operational activities) and issued in October 1990 on the strengthening of the resident coordinator system (see A/45/273/Add.3).

The ideas contained in the Committee's guidelines on strengthening the resident coordinator system are useful but still need to be more fully and systematically applied. As experience in collaborative action at the country level increases, these guidelines need to be periodically reviewed on the basis of a careful involvement of successful practitioners at the country level. Most United Nations organizations indicate that the guidelines are being followed to strengthen the Resident Coordinator system. A more systematic monitoring of the implementation of these guidelines and other tools to strengthen the resident coordinator system is required.

112. Most resident coordinators indicate that they have begun to implement the guidelines to create more of a team approach with other country representatives and to share programming information. Assessment missions noted that stronger headquarters-level support by the system should reinforce the efforts of resident coordinators in this regard. Since the issuance of the guidelines, there has been an increase in the number of United Nations system meetings at the field level, some with governmental participation. Cross-sectoral programme-oriented meetings are present in the majority of cases but there are not always structured mechanisms for follow-up. The sharing of substantive information has also increased: many examples of newsletters and other forms of written information exchange take place.

113. Important factors identified in the course of this assessment affecting the functioning of the resident coordinator system that need to be considered in strengthening future guidelines are:

(a) Awareness by Governments of the benefits of the resident coordinator system and the use of the system at all government levels;

(b) The resident coordinator's working relationship with the Government;

(c) Clarity of the guidelines, including respective responsibilities of the resident coordinator and the United Nations system representatives;

(d) Good personal and working relationships among all field representatives of the United Nations system;

(e) The resident coordinator's relationship with the donor community.

Workload

114. The tasks that are looked after by resident coordinators show a wide range: coordination of United Nations system actions at the country level; oversight of a very large number of specialized funds and funding sources besides UNDP (including UNDP trust funds and special funds); promotion of global priorities and provision of substantive team leadership in programming; communication with the varied representation of the United Nations system at the field level; acting as the Secretary-General's designated official in security matters; and disaster relief and emergency humanitarian assistance, not only through the United Nations system, but also from other sources. For

agencies without independent field representation, the resident coordinator plays a pivotal role in mobilizing their technical expertise to assist Governments.

115. The current workload of resident coordinators is high and consists of a variety of functions. Although variations between countries are considerable, overall global averages, obtained from a survey of resident coordinators, show that an average of 50 per cent of the time of resident coordinators is devoted to UNDP matters (UNDP is undertaking a comprehensive study of the workload of resident representatives further to Governing Council decision 92/37 and the preparation of the 1994-1995 budget). The remaining 50 per cent is distributed over a range of responsibilities: system-wide coordination functions as resident coordinator (14 per cent), representation of United Nations organizations and entities (such as UNFPA, WFP, the Department of Economic and Social Development, the Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Coordinator (UNDRO), UNHCR, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), etc.) (23 per cent), common system issues in administration, security and protocol (9 per cent), and disaster prevention and humanitarian assistance (6 per cent). Categories fluctuate of course depending on local circumstances. In countries facing special circumstances and thus requiring important humanitarian assistance, UNDP's percentage averages below 40 per cent. Under certain circumstances, humanitarian needs represent the largest commitment of time. Events such as the holding of United Nations meetings (regional meetings, conferences, etc.) and numerous missions, both United Nations and non-United Nations, visiting the country, engage their time and may seriously disrupt their normal work for relatively long periods of time.

B. Common premises

116. By its resolution 44/211, paragraph 15 (d), the General Assembly requested all organs, organizations and bodies of the United Nations system to make the necessary arrangements to establish common premises at the country level. The 1991 report on operational activities included detailed information on the current situation (A/46/206/Add.3, paras. 29-39).

117. Subsequently, by paragraph 25 of its resolution 46/219, the General Assembly requested that the report for the triennial policy review include an assessment of progress made in achieving common premises and propose a plan for the full achievement of this objective, where feasible and without any additional costs to developing countries.

118. A permanent Joint Consultative Group on Policy subgroup on common premises and services oversees each common premises project, including planning, design, financing, construction and management. In its search for an innovative approach, the subgroup has initiated negotiations with a private developer to construct common premises in Zaire on a lease/buy-back option. Plans are afoot to replicate such a model in Bangladesh, Benin, the Central African Republic, Egypt, Namibia, Pakistan, Senegal and Sierra Leone.

119. Since 1991 the members of the Joint Consultative Group on Policies have taken the following additional steps in respect of funding available for common premises:

(a) The UNDP reserve for field accommodation has been given the authority to programme $35 million, provided actual expenditure in one year does not exceed $25 million. The UNDP Governing Council, in its decision 90/44, authorized the Administrator to utilize, as a last resort, the reserve for field accommodation to purchase office accommodation when such purchases would be shared with organizations of the Joint Consultative Group on Policies and, to the extent possible, other United Nations organizations in the field. Moreover, the UNDP Governing Council, at its June 1991 session, established a revolving fund of $5 million to meet UNFPA's share in the construction of the United Nations system common premises.

(b) The UNICEF Executive Board has approved the authorization of a reserve Fund for field office accommodation and staff housing for a total maximum of $22 million, of which 75 per cent ($16.5 million) would be earmarked for field office accommodation relating mainly to UNICEF participation in common premises with other United Nations organizations.

(c) WFP, the other partner of the Joint Consultative Group on Policies, will continue to finance its share of the capital cost involved in common premises through advance payment of rent.

120. Beyond the Joint Consultative Group on Policies, the Consultative Committee on Substantive Questions (Operational Activities) considered the question of common premises in 1990 and agreed to encourage the sharing of common premises and services unless particular requirements and material conditions imposed limitations on such sharing. The Committee requested all field representatives to cooperate fully with resident coordinators in achieving the maximum degree of sharing of common premises and services. Since the adoption of the Consultative Committee on Substantive Questions (Operational Activities) position, UNESCO has joined common premises in four countries. Nearly half of the premises occupied by UNESCO field units are offered free of charge by host Governments, thus making it uneconomical for UNESCO to move to common premises requiring payment of rent. The position of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and WHO is to place its field offices in or near the Ministries of Agriculture and Health whenever possible. Almost all premises currently occupied by WHO are provided free of charge by host Governments.

121. In cases where premises are provided by the host country for specialized agencies, additional costs would accrue in moving to common premises. There is room for selective, country-by-country reviews with the aim of arriving at the most cost-effective solution. A special effort is now under way to achieve further progress and the Joint Consultative Group on Policy is reviewing the matter on the basis of an agreed plan of action and available resources. Particular attention is devoted to the requirements in the Baltic States and the Commonwealth of Independent States.

122. Additional progress in achieving common premises must be made to improve the coherence of United Nations system cooperation. As requested by the General Assembly in its resolution 46/219, paragraph 25, a plan for the full achievement of this objective within available resources needs to be implemented. To this end the Joint Consultative Group on Policy subgroup on common premises has been asked to prepare a plan for a fivefold increase of common premises over the next two or three years. This plan will be reviewed later in 1992 with a view to agreeing to specific measures for its implementation.

C. Decentralization

123. Decentralization and delegation of authority to the field are central concerns of General Assembly resolutions 44/211 and previous resolutions. Within this framework of agreed policy, the field offices are expected to carry on their operations with a minimum of headquarters control and intervention in operational matters; headquarters role is seen essentially as providing strategic guidance and support. However, these resolutions have not yet led to a coherent and streamlined United Nations approach. Some of the reasons are analysed below.

124. Recipient countries call for greater decentralization and delegation to the field level so that technical cooperation activities and in particular their implementation are brought closer to national realities and allow nationals greater involvement. They also require procedures of the United Nations system to be harmonized and simplified to the maximum extent and they would like more responsiveness to the procedures of the recipient Government. There is strong interest by Governments for United Nations system policies and procedures to be simplified to improve coordination and country-level management. The use of the programme approach and national execution are considered to be steps in this direction.

125. The assessment in this regard has brought out the following issues:

(a) The field presence of the United Nations system needs to be rationalized to better provide multidisciplinary advice to meet countries' priorities. Technical advisers may be required within the field office or from regional offices or headquarters of United Nations agencies or from other sources within the country and elsewhere. Under the United Nations tripartite system, the obvious first choice is agencies of the system if external technical advice is needed. Since national authorities will increasingly have executing roles and because a wide variety of sources for services are now available, these authorities should also be able to tap other sources. In this connection, it is believed that progress should also be made by agencies of the United Nations system to "nationalize" and regionalize information on their rosters for sources of expertise, equipment, training institutions, and so on. For example, databases such as TCDC-INRES should integrate national and regional sources of technical expertise into their rosters.

(b) A somewhat separate though related matter is that the field representatives have tasks not directly linked to operational activities, including the promotion of standards and conventions. Each organization's field representation is set up to perform tasks as determined by the governing bodies and secretariats of the respective organizations, which may go beyond the specific programme requirements of operational activities.

(c) Organizations without field representation retain authority at headquarters for certain specific operations that cannot be decentralized. However, the organizations draw on the services whenever possible of UNDP resident representatives. The circumstances of organizations without field representation means that special arrangements will be necessary to enable such organizations to provide policy and technical advice to governments as part of the multidisciplinary response from the United Nations system (see para. 126 (b)).

126. The role of the United Nations system is shifting as a result of increased assumption of management responsibility by national authorities. Among the specific steps being taken or considered are:

(a) Decentralization of technical and administrative capacity to country offices to meet needs at the country level;

(b) Development of integrated, interdepartmental and multidisciplinary approaches at all levels to meet needs at the country level;

(c) Substantive reorganization of major technical departments at headquarters to strengthen interaction between functions such as sector studies, policy advice, development research, standard setting and implementation of operational activities;

(d) Restructuring of the headquarters units to reflect current/changing need for technical and substantive services at the country level.

127. It is widely recognized that, to perform their delegated functions, the country representatives and resident coordinators should be able to call for the requisite expertise for programming as well as for other phases of the operational cycle, as need arises, from United Nations system agencies and from other sources. The type of advice needed will depend upon the themes or sectors to which the Government gives priority and also upon the Government's own capabilities.

128. As concerns delegation of authority from headquarters to the country level, a few organizations have achieved considerable overall delegation of authority while others have taken only specific steps such as raising the level of field office approval authority for programme/projects and giving increased flexibility to deal with budgetary revisions. Headquarters-level approval procedures often cause delays and are believed to remove decision-making from the level best acquainted with national needs and conditions. Some of the procedural difficulties still encountered include:

(a) Inadequate or unequal delegation of programme/project approval authority;

(b) With some exceptions (e.g. UNICEF), insufficient delegation of authority granted to country representation in implementation of projects. The attribution of fellowships, purchase of equipment - except up to certain monetary limits - recruitment of consultants - including nationally recruited, and all significant budgetary adjustments are still submitted to headquarters for action or approval.

129. Accountability remains a sine qua non of delegation. The need is not only for financial accountability but also for ensuring management or programme performance, impact and sustainability at the country level, whether or not national execution is concerned.

130. The changing context of operational activities demands increased decentralization to the country level. Among the key elements of a decentralized approach in line with the intention of the General Assembly and the requirements of developing countries are:

(a) Greater decentralization can be achieved within the framework of a country strategy note and individual country programmes. Once programmes have been approved at headquarters level their implementation should be delegated - a practice followed by some United Nations organizations with success. In order to meet the intent of General Assembly resolution 44/211, it is a prerequisite that the programme approach be applied in order to produce well thought out programmes at the multisectoral, sectoral or subsectoral level. Only the most essential limitation should normally be placed on the authority of the field office either due to the level of external input (the importance or complexity of a programme is in any event not dependent on the size of the external input), or because of national execution, so long as the programme framework is respected. The exception would be if a point of principle or policy were involved. To the extent that such difficulties can be foreseen by headquarters, they should be clarified at the programming stage. To carry out this arrangement, in addition to following the programme approach for developing a good programme, the following main steps are necessary:

(i) The programme or project document should contain the information that will allow delegation to take place. A format should be developed that allows delegation after approval by the governing body;

(ii) The programme or project document format should be designed by keeping in mind that it is the Government that is managing the programme or project. Sufficient leeway should be available in the document to allow for budgetary flexibility because technical cooperation is not an exact science and too detailed planning results in too many adjustments.

(b) Decentralization requires strengthened capacity of the resident coorinator system to provide full support in accordance with the programme requirements of the country. The resident coordinator must thus be enabled to assemble and manage, in consultation with the relevant agencies, the requisite technical expertise for programme support from sources within and outside the country.

(c) As national execution and the programme approach take hold, further delegation of responsibility is essential to react in a timely manner to government requirements. Moreover, technical and operational support must by readily available to the national implementing entities.

(d) Increased flexibility, simplification and harmonization of the policies and procedures of the United Nations system must be achieved. Greater harmonization and simplification of policies, procedures and formats and adaptation to national requirements must be developed to facilitate both national execution and increased decentralization to the field.

131. As concerns the question of simplification of procedures, it should be mentioned that some of the major problems in this area will probably be mitigated when the new guidelines on national execution that UNDP issued at the start of this year are applied. In some cases, more time, further simplification, training and concerted effort to reach government and United Nations system common understanding for national execution were cited as necessary. Chapter VII describes training support foreseen to give effect to these guidelines. Another point to be kept in mind is that under national execution, national rules can apply for most activities. In the real context of country operations, each country should have the option to use its national rules and regulations to the maximum extent possible.

132. Accountability at the field level, both financial and substantial, has to be ensured in a more decentralized system. It is dependent on the quality of the country offices and upon the procedures that are followed in all phases of the programming cycle. As greater decentralization occurs, the quality of the services for technical and financial accountability are being strengthened wherever necessary.

D. Recommendations for the resident coordinator system

133. While the resident coordinator system has been strengthened over the past three years, further progress is needed. Resident coordinators work in very differing environments, performing a variety of functions ranging from development services and technical advice to humanitarian assistance and information functions. Experience acquired so far in responding to varying conditions and requirements must be used to further strengthen the resident coordinator system in relation to individual country requirements.

134. Several important elements emerged from the assessment as being essential for an improved functioning of the resident coordinators system:

(a) An agreed process and mechanism to communicate the common goals and strategies of the United Nations system at the country level, in response to national priorities of Governments, to serve as the basis for coordinated action by the United Nations system;

(b) A clearer set of guidelines for the functioning of the resident coordinator system, drawing fully on successful experience, and a capacity to support the resident coordinator system by the United Nations, and appropriate monitoring mechanisms involving the concerned organizations;

(c) Technical capacity through the resident coordinator system of providing high-quality and timely support to the Government on substantive, programmatic matters, including the provision of multidisciplinary advice to support programme requirements;

(d) Better access to relevant data and substantive information required for programmes at the country level;

(e) Further decentralization of capacity to the field level, delegation of authority and more flexibility to respond rapidly and to adapt procedures to those of Governments.

135. Flexibility is indispensable to meet the varying country requirements and conditions of countries. While the resident coordinator system should be reinforced in all countries, specific requirements of certain categories of countries, such as humanitarian assistance and support to aid coordination and resource mobilization, require early and specific action to improve the functioning of the system.

136. In countries facing especially difficult circumstances and emergencies, it appears that United Nations system actions have been much more effectively and directly coordinated than is the case for regular development activities, largely because there have been clear, common goals. These situations, while in many respects unique, offer lessons that should serve to strengthen the resident coordinator system, specifically as concerns the critical importance of having clear common operational goals.

137. In other countries, where the United Nations system plays a particularly significant role, a strengthened resident coordinator system is of great importance. In many cases, these countries are in a process of structural adjustment, which has a major impact on the macro-policy framework under which operational activities are carried out. Urgent and effective action is required, demanding the utmost coherence of action by the United Nations system.

138. In the Baltic States and the Commonwealth of Independent States new functions are required of the United Nations system and resident coordinators. The Secretary-General, responding to these new requirements, decided to establish in six countries interim United Nations offices headed by a United Nations representative who also functions as resident coordinator.

In its decision 92/43, the UNDP Governing Council authorized him to open a limited number of temporary national and regional offices in that region, and requested him to work with the United Nations and other relevant United Nations bodies to reach an early agreement that will ensure an integrated approach and integrated presence. Moreover, in its resolution 1992/40 on the same subject, the Economic and Social Council stressed the importance of an integrated approach and a unified field presence in the region, requested relevant bodies such as the Administrative Committee on Coordination and the Joint Consultative Group on Policy to work out such an approach, and requested the Secretary-General to annex to the present report information on the manner of implementing this approach. This information is consequently provided in an addendum.

139. Many achievements resulting from the resident coordinator system have relied too much on ad hoc initiatives and not enough on a systematic approach. More consistent and coherent guidance from the various headquarters is required on major policy questions. Increased support from headquarters of the United Nations organizations should come in a coordinated manner and on the basis of processes agreed upon in the Administrative Committee on Coordination and other United Nations system coordinating entities such as the Joint Consultative Group on Policy. Several proposals to strengthen this aspect of the system have been advanced at the recent substantive session of the Economic and Social Council by UNICEF UNDP, UNFPA and other United Nations system organizations, including strengthened monitoring of common efforts through regular reports and review meetings, and strengthened oversight capacity of the resident coordinator system by the United Nations. This matter must receive priority attention at the Joint Consultative Group on Policy and the Administrative Committee on Coordination.

140. The Consultative Committee on Substantive Questions (Operational activities) guidelines (see A/45/273/Add.2 and General Assembly resolution 46/219, para. 23 (a)) have been helpful. They need to be effectively implemented and periodically adjusted in the light of experience. The functioning of the resident coordinator system should be further supported by:

(a) A better understanding of the value of the system by all levels of government and various intergovernmental bodies;

(b) Clear instructions to resident coordinators and other representatives of the United Nations system by the United Nations and the other headquarters of the United Nations system, collectively and individually, strengthening the role of the resident coordinator;

(c) Key elements of the current guidelines, such as the formation of thematic groups, should be implemented fully, and there should be regular reporting by resident coordinators, for review and feed-back by senior officials from the relevant organizations;

(d) Guidelines on the respective responsibilities within the resident coordinator system in elaborating a country strategy note as described earlier;

(e) Arrangements for better access to substantive research and analytical information, including access to data banks and other information systems of the United Nations system;

(f) Ensuring, in view of the many new demands, that the selection process ensures a high quality of resident coordinators.

141. In order to respond more effectively to requirements for multidisciplinary advice, there is a need to take the following steps:

(a) Reinforcing collaborative cross-sectoral programmes through strengthened coordination and harmonization of the policies of the United Nations organizations through the Administrative Committee on Coordination, the Joint Consultative Group on Policy and ad hoc mechanisms on specific, strategic issues;

(b) Strengthening the functioning of the resident coordinator system as the team leader of the United Nations system of the recipient country for system-wide questions and giving the resident coordinator full authority and means to constitute multidisciplinary teams, chaired by the organization or individual best suited, in accordance with the programme requirements of the country. These could be composed of qualified specialists from within the United Nations system and the United Nations system country teams, and from other sources as required, including:

(i) Facilitating access and funding by the resident coordinator of technical specialists to advise on multidisciplinary needs and the establishment of new arrangements to draw quickly on technical agency or regional United Nations expertise;

(ii) Increasing training for United Nations staff involved in operational activities;

(iii) Strengthening United Nations country team support representation in technical areas to make available experienced technical staff from elsewhere, as advisers to resident coordinators in accordance with country requirements;

(iv) Increasing analytical capacities and technical skills of national managers and to provide ongoing advice for increasing levels of national execution.

142. As noted in the assessments, in some cases the resident coordinator's functions constitute almost a full-time assignment. This fact needs to be taken into account in considering the strengthening of the system as the current workload and variety of functions affect the effective functioning of the system. Moreover, resident coordinators require more comprehensive and effective guidance and support. Reflecting the new requirements of the 1990s and the views expressed by Governments and organizations of the United Nations system, as well as taking into account the assessment of the current functioning of the resident coordinator system, additional steps need to be

taken to reinforce the resident coordinator system, including the consideration of greater involvement of the concerned organizations of the United Nations system. Proposals advanced in recent months by the Secretary-General and various heads of United Nations system organizations are being reviewed to determine the most effective steps.

143. The resident coordinator system needs to be strengthened on the basis of the experience acquired. The goal is to create an effective system at the country level to provide integrated substantive leadership of United Nations system development cooperation and for humanitarian assistance as well as in other relevant areas within the mandate of the United Nations. The specific functions and range of responsibilities need to be adjusted to the requirements of each country after appropriate consultations with the recipient country.

144. Appropriate arrangements need to be made to provide consistent, substantive support in an integrated manner, reflecting all dimensions of country-level cooperation of the United Nations system. The resident coordinator needs to be supported by a team of qualified staff from the concerned funds and programmes either on a full-time basis, or on a short-time assignment on the basis of an agreed workplan. Moreover, flexible mechanisms are required to make available multidisciplinary advice and operational support in accordance with specific country requirements.

145. Concurrent action is required to streamline and strengthen operational activities at the country level by reviewing in the appropriate forums the composition and structure of country presence to ensure that it reflects the priority requirements of the country and increase the effectiveness and impact of United Nations system cooperation as well as to reduce administrative costs.

146. Additional progress in achieving common premises must be made to improve the coherence of United Nations system cooperation. To this end the Joint Consultative Group on Policy is expected to increase common premises significantly on the basis of an agreed plan and available resources. Consultations will also be carried out within the framework of the Administrative Committee on Coordination.

VI. NATIONAL EXECUTION

147. Wider application of the national execution modality is occurring in all regions and in various types of countries. In UNICEF, IFAD and WFP national execution is the norm. This also largely applies to WHO. For UNFPA, the proportion varies, but is relatively much higher than for UNDP, where it is rising. While UNDP has adopted national execution as a modality for UNDP-funded projects and programmes, some Governments and United Nations agencies caution a gradual process. It is expected that as the programme approach takes hold and the new support cost arrangements are put into place, a further shift to national execution will be facilitated. Nevertheless, some concern is being expressed that national execution should not lead to a loss of the specialized agencies' technical or tripartite role.

148. In its resolution 46/219, paragraph 8, the General Assembly stressed that the national execution modality should be the norm for programmes and projects funded by the United Nations system. Analysis of government and system information shows that while the utilization of national institutions and capacities is often positive, problems are to be expected if Governments have shortages of public sector resources, specifically technically trained people and insufficient funding.

149. The General Assembly has stressed the principal responsibility of developing countries in determining their capacity to execute programmes and projects. Most Governments are assessing this through consultations with field staff of the United Nations agencies. In this connection, it is also relevant that the UNDP Governing Council, in its decision 92/22, endorsed the proposal of the Administrator to delegate to resident representatives the authority for the approval of national execution within the existing delegated approval level and taking into account the relevant provisions of Governing Council 90/21.

150. The introduction of a new support cost arrangement as from mid-1992 is another factor in accelerating the move towards national execution of UNDP operations, particularly in those countries where the proportion of nationally executed projects is relatively low.

151. Some Governments lack national capacity for administrative and financial management. For this reason and to ease the burden of meeting the variety of financial and reporting requirements of the United Nations system, many Governments have established national support units for national execution, often with international funding and administrative support.

152. Agencies are expected to play an increasing role in policy support, programming services and in monitoring and evaluation. With technical support services being brought closer to the country level, greater effectiveness of the United Nations system is expected in support of the national execution.

153. There is evidence from Governments and the United Nations system of projected progress in national execution. The data show that:

(a) Wherever the current volume of nationally executed projects is low substantial increases are projected over the next five years;

(b) Wherever the proportion of nationally executed projects is at a higher level, increases are projected to encompass the majority of future projects foreseen for the same period.

154. Commitment to national execution by Governments and United Nations system representatives, particularly by United Nations system resident coordinators, plays an important part in its extension. Nevertheless, there are situations where national execution is not possible owing to scarce human resources or other reasons. Any commitment to the goal of national execution will be tempered by specific preferences and capacities of each Government.

155. The executing agencies of the United Nations system have raised the following points, which in their view require some attention to make national execution more effective:

(a) A review of the factors that lead to United Nations agency technical support not being effectively utilized and how the new support-cost arrangements might resolve that problem;

(b) Simplification of existing procedures and design of appropriate legal instruments;

(c) Progressive approach to ensure maintenance of the tripartite character of the United Nations system assistance in substantive, technical areas, specifically for areas where complex and changing technologies are involved;

(d) Where strong external technical support is needed, the available United Nations expertise should be effectively utilized;

(e) Ensuring United Nations system technical involvement for programme accountability will need to be further considered;

(f) Improving national capacities in administrative and financial management as well as in technical skills.

Simplification of rules and procedures

156. The complexity and multiplicity of United Nations system rules and procedures are considered by many resident coordinators and recipient Governments as an obstacle to the assumption of national execution by the Government and to the full use of national capacities. At the same time it must also be noted that mission visits revealed that complex government rules, particularly foreign exchange restraints, may also create difficulties for Governments, which then preferred to use the United Nations system for specific procurement and recruitment activities.

157. The current variety and volume of rules and procedures relating to administration and programme and project identification, formulation, appraisal, monitoring and evaluation required by the United Nations system inhibit greater national participation in these processes or divert scarce governmental capacities from more substantive work. Greater harmonization and simplification of United Nations procedures for operational activities is widely considered necessary. It is generally believed that simplification of policies, rules and procedures will facilitate national participation, enhance efficiency, and will make better use of scarce resources both for the Governments and for the United Nations system with respect to existing roles and mandates for further coordination.

Accountability: financial and substantive

158. Accountability, both in financial and programme terms, is an important factor in the successful application of the national execution modality. Considerable progress has been made regarding financial accountability. Training for government officials to improve their capacity for financial reporting and audit is widely used, and would be more effective with simplification and harmonization of procedural requirements.

159. The need not only for financial accountability but also for monitoring performance and evaluating impact and sustainability on the part of national authorities is crucial for national execution. In order to discharge fully the responsibilities to the governing bodies, the United Nations system must also be assured of a satisfactory level of programme performance.

160. With respect to "full programme accountability" under national execution, the focus of the United Nations system at the country level has too often been on financial aspects of accountability. Programme management accountability responsibilities require performance indicators for management audits to take place. A related issue raised by the review is whether under national execution release of funds is to be made on the basis of financial accountability, that is whether inputs have been provided and activities carried out as foreseen, or whether it will be based on achievement of agreed targets in terms of outputs and results.

VII. COORDINATED TRAINING STRATEGIES AND NATIONAL CAPACITY

A. Use of national capacity

161. The central purpose of operational activities continues to be the effective utilization and strengthening of national capacities. The programme approach, national execution, decentralization and delegation to the field level are essential methods to reach the goal of utilizing and strengthening national capacities.

162. Related to impact and the success or failure of operational activities is the Government's commitment and ability to provide and sustain human and financial resources for the implementation of national programmes to which United Nations activities are linked. Deficiencies Governments indicate may take various forms, among which the following are particularly relevant:

(a) Shortages of qualified human resources in the public sector (affects management, time available, number of government personnel);

(b) Specific lack of legal, accounting, audit and financial management personnel as well as lack of suitable discipline in these activities (regarding budgets, reporting requirements);

(c) Lack of funding or counterpart financial resources;

(d) Lack of trained personnel or training resources;

(e) Delays in decision-making, cumbersome national bureaucracies and lack of delegation of authority.

163. United Nations agencies see the fuller use of qualified national personnel in United Nations-supported projects, as distinct from national execution, as a key element in the utilization and strengthening of national capacities. Methods include naming national project directors for agency-executed projects, using national professional project personnel, the use by UNDP of development support services to recruit nationals, greater local subcontracting and the establishment of rosters containing nationals. Analysis of the resident coordinators' information indicates that nationals are usually utilized for all programme and project identification, monitoring and evaluation functions. The level of involvement shows most countries' nationals are frequently or primarily involved in all the identification, monitoring and evaluation phases.

164. Among other effective measures reported that increase the utilization and enhancement of national capacities are the following:

(a) Repeated project visits and monitoring by field office staff to provide guidance when needed;

(b) Study tours by national officers outside the country to observe other national operational units in developing countries with similar conditions;

(c) Frequent briefing sessions and training workshops for individual(s) or unit(s) involved in national execution;

(d) Assisting national officials and auditors on a project-by-project basis with respect to financial reporting requirements;

(e) Frequent advocacy meetings with government focal points for national execution and for ministers' information.

165. Some countries have indicated that sufficient importance is not being given to the tasks of using and building up national capacities. Concern was expressed that the impact on national capacity through expert services and training is not always effective. A more systematic and integrated approach to capacity-building is clearly a continuing priority for Governments. The recently introduced changes in support costs and national execution and increased national participation in training programmes are steps in that direction.

166. Another set of problems has emerged with regard to nationals' status, retention and remuneration during implementation and continuing employment of the nationals after the project ends. Inconsistency exists regarding payment of salary supplements to nationals already employed by Governments. It is

also known that the impact and sustainability of programme outputs are often affected by the availability, expertise, rules and remuneration of national personnel. 13/

167. A major effort in capacity-building through the extension of national execution and training is still needed. A systematic and comprehensive approach to capacity-building should be integrated into all country strategy documents. Interrelated decisions on support costs, national execution, the programme approach and the development of guidelines, training programmes and monitoring systems should produce substantial further progress in capacity-building.

B. Training requirements

168. Significant efforts in training have been carried out by the United Nations system as a part of technical cooperation. The Consultative Committee on Substantive Questions (Operational activities)-sponsored workshops of senior United Nations system personnel, though limited to date in the number of participants, have been cited as useful by many United Nations system headquarters and country-level participants. More recently, training in procedures and requirements for national execution has been carried out in a large number of countries. The United Nations system organizations have undertaken training and workshop programmes in the design and formulation of projects and in their implementation and management.

169. While there is positive experience with utilization of national capacity in over half of the countries, Governments and the United Nations system resident coordinators indicate there is a shortage of public sector and technical human resources in many developing countries. Given such requirements, major efforts in capacity-building through training have been carried out by the United Nations system for many years as an integral part of technical cooperation. More recently, local training programmes for national officials on the procedures and requirements for national execution have been undertaken in over 70 countries and local guidelines on national execution have been prepared to assist in this process. Steps to strengthen national capacity in the management and implementation of programmes and projects have been taken by United Nations system organizations with training and workshop programmes, some consensus-building mechanisms, increased national participation in project design and formulation. An increasing share of training budgets is devoted to this type of training. Despite these training efforts, some countries reviewed indicated that the United Nations system did not sufficiently succeed in the pre-eminent task of building up national capacities.

170. The number of national officials now trained for national execution is very substantial, but the range varies from under 50 for about half of the countries to as high as 5,000 for two countries. It is expected that on the average at least as many officials still remain to be trained and further training specifically aimed at promoting national capacities is needed. Such

training efforts should include programming concepts, methods to achieve implementation of strategies, introduction of consensus-building mechanisms, project design and formulation activities, monitoring and evaluation functions, and programme accountability issues to enhance future impact and sustainability.

171. The review of ongoing system-wide training in operational activities discloses that a considerable quantity and quality of work is already in progress, covering a wide range of substantive areas. These include (a) training in the design, monitoring and evaluation of programmes and projects; (b) the organizations of the Joint Consultative Group on Policy, to maximize delivery have large programmes, possibly 10,000 participants each year, to share information on their policies, priorities and procedures; (c) the shift to national execution, which advances the training of national project directors and similar staff; (d) training events on themes such as gender, environment, refugees and returnees, and disaster management; (e) the current series of courses in field coordination for United Nations system representatives.

172. The principal target group for training support comprise:

(a) Officials of the national coordinating authority responsible for external resource management. This office is usually linked with or lodged in the ministry of finance or planning or foreign affairs. As decentralization advances in national administrations, it is observed that the processing of externally funded development cooperation is increasingly shared between central authorities and major sectoral ministries, such as agriculture, industry, health and education.

(b) Staff in the United Nations system: the headquarters structures of many organizations provide for functions of formulating programme support on the one hand, and of field operations on the other, to be separately established, all of whom require training; this will include staff directly engaged in the negotiation of operational activities, as distinct from the attendant technical and managerial support services.

(c) At country level, prime importance is given to programme and project management. Both the programme approach and national execution are expected to increase rapidly. With these, the number of nationals directly involved in United Nations system operational activities will increase.

(d) Again, at country level, the staff of most United Nations system organizations are concerned with operational activities and, with the expansion of decentralized authority, more training will be required. However, it should be recalled here that some United Nations system staff in the field carry out mandates that are not directly related to operational activities.

C. Workshops on coordination

173. Under the auspices of the Consultative Committee on Substantive Questions (Operational activities), seven workshops on country-level coordination were organized by the ILO International Training Centre at Turin (see below). These workshops will be assessed in September and a decision on future action will be taken at that time. There is much support for these workshops by former participants and United Nations organizations.

Workshops on coordination for senior United Nations system representatives

Course	Number of United Nations agencies	Country teams	Number of participants
Interregional March 1991	12	Bangladesh, Botswana, Ghana	25
Interregional May 1991	12	Brazil, Cameroon, India, Indonesia, Pakistan	35
Africa regional July 1991	10	Gambia, Sierra Leone, Swaziland, Uganda, Zimbabwe	16
Asia regional October/November 1991	16	China, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Nepal, Thailand	31
Latin America February/March 1992	12	Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic	26
Middle East and Arab States regional May 1992	14	Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Turkey	29
Africa regional June 1992	12	Chad, Mali, Niger, Rwanda, Senegal	27

174. These workshops cover three main components: international development issues and their challenge to the United Nations System in the 1990s; the system's mandates and capacities; and lastly, collaboration and coordination at the field level, including information on activities of smaller agencies without field representation. The workshops are meant to be participant-driven, with emphasis as much on processes of collaboration as on substantive issues. Group work and real life case-studies are important features. Extension is foreseen of this type of course to the country level

and the inclusion of national officials involved in coordination of foreign assistance is being widely supported.

175. The scope of the programme should be expanded to include national participants, with national needs reflected in subjects covered. Preferably, one half at least should comprise national participants, at an effective functional level, not only from government but also, as appropriate, from non-governmental organizations and the private sector when these are involved in national execution. Government staff should be not only from the Government's established coordinating authority for external resources and the familiar membership of the ministries of finance and planning, but also from the major sectoral ministries as well. The objective would be to reach significant numbers of the development community in the country. Participation, both national and international, would be at an "influential" level, but should not be restricted to a thin layer at the top. Appropriate staff of bilateral agencies should be eligible. To the extent useful, national (even regional) development institutions should be associated as a source of resource persons and/or participants.

176. In considering the future evolution of the workshops the following elements will be taken into account:

(a) A major segment of the workshop should be devoted to human development. Information should be shared with participants on how to translate human development concerns into concrete, realistic development strategies and to review the related finance and management issues.

(b) In appropriate cases, the workshops should give special attention to subjects that are gaining prominence in changing world conditions, for instance, United Nations system responses to the needs of economies in transition, disaster management, refugees and humanitarian relief, besides the all-pervading concerns in sustainable development and the environment.

(c) Securing a coherent response from the United Nations system at the field level for collaborative programming and programme approach should remain the main objective. Case-studies should be used as training models.

(d) There is a need for a government structure to provide coordinated leadership in programming and programme approach, using examples as training models, and a need to "internalize" the arrangements so that they are truly national exercises for which assistance is provided.

(e) Workshops should incorporate the national execution and implementation concepts in the national structure.

(f) They should aim at the resident coordinator system more effective and improving the capacity to conduct a meaningful dialogue with the Government.

(g) Attention should be paid to improving impact, sustainability and national self-reliance and to the role of Governments and the United Nations system.

177. Within the frame of resolutions 44/211 and 46/219 on reform in operational activities of the United Nations system, workshop-type sessions for national and international staff should consider how to give best effect to the guidelines and models that have been developed for enhancing operational activities. These workshops should also be vehicles in the search for simplifying aid procedures and reducing their diversity. Country-specific case-studies would be used as training models and, therefore, not be hypothetical. When workshops are organized at country level, per capita cost will be lowered.

D. Recommendations on training

178. The immediate and practical approach to evolving a comprehensive training strategy in operational activities should be based on well proven arrangements, and be the result of work carried out within the framework of the Consultative Committee on Substantive Questions (Operational activities) and individually by a number of United Nations organizations. It could involve:

(a) Training for enhanced national development management within the framework of national execution and national capacity-building should be given high priority as a multi-agency, common effort based on the extensive work being done by some organizations;

(b) In programme development and coordination, the workshops on management of field coordination for senior United Nations representatives, initiated by the Consultative Committee on Substantive Questions (Operational activities) through the ILO International Training Centre at Turin should reach a broader target group, involving senior officials and dealing with major development issues, including national officials.

179. There is support within the Consultative Committee on Substantive Questions (Operational activities) for at least two common training programmes, both of them at the country level: one in project management and the other in programme and project development.

180. The possibility of developing a coordinated training strategy was studied, in accordance with paragraph 15 of General Assembly resolution 46/219. As a result, a number of initiatives will be taken. Two courses of action are relevant:

(a) Continuing the management courses already organized by FAO, the Department of Economic and Social Development and other organizations for national project directors. Costs are charged to individual project budgets. Many of these courses are held in agency headquarters, or in other locations requiring travel abroad.

(b) Given the increasing number of nationally managed projects, and the rapid turnover in national project management staff, it is wise to establish a training capacity internal to each country.

181. Training in project management within the frame of national execution and national capacity-building is given high priority. This is very much in accord with paragraph 22 (d) of resolution 46/219, which invites attention to the importance of "improving accountability through training and development in national monitoring capacity, as well as in auditing and financial reporting". This field of training could benefit by being organized as a multi-agency common programme.

182. A scheme for the training of trainers is needed. While the project-by-project funded training schemes should continue, there is a need to mobilize a separate and single fund to underwrite the start-up cost, and the continuing organizing expenses of a global multi-agency trainers programme for a good spread of in-country national trainers.

Notes

1/ See UNFPA, The State of World Population 1992, p. 3.

2/ World Economic Survey 1992. Current trends and policies in the world economy, United Nations, New York 1992.

3/ Comprehensive Triennial Policy Review of Operational Activities for Development of the United Nations System adopted on 22 December 1989.

4/ See the report of the first session of the Consultative Committee on Substantive Questions (Operational activities), 1992.

5/ See the 1990 annual report (A/45/273/Add.3) and the 1991 annual report (A/46/206, para. 68). A full description of recent actions is contained in these reports.

6/ Decisions 90/26 of 22 June 1990, 91/32 of 25 June 1991 and 92/22 of 26 May 1992.

7/ Decisions 90/21 of 22 June 1990, 91/27 of 21 June 1991 and 92/22.

8/ E/1992/82/Add.1, para. 38.

9/ This was foreseen in the Consultative Committee on Substantive Questions (Operational activities) guidelines, which also formed the basis of the very effective initiative of organizing workshops for senior field representatives.

10/ Decision 92/23 of 26 May 1992.

Notes (continued)

11/ See General Assembly resolutions 44/211, para. 17 (c), and 46/219, para. 18 (a).

12/ For country-level details see A/46/206/Add.3.

13/ See also JIU/REP/91/1.